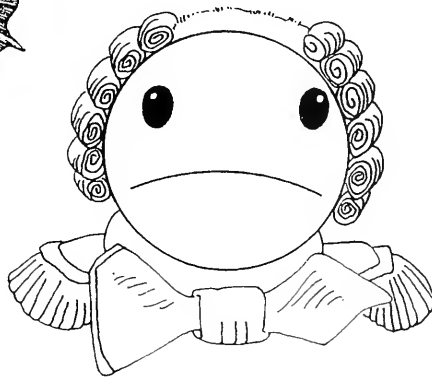
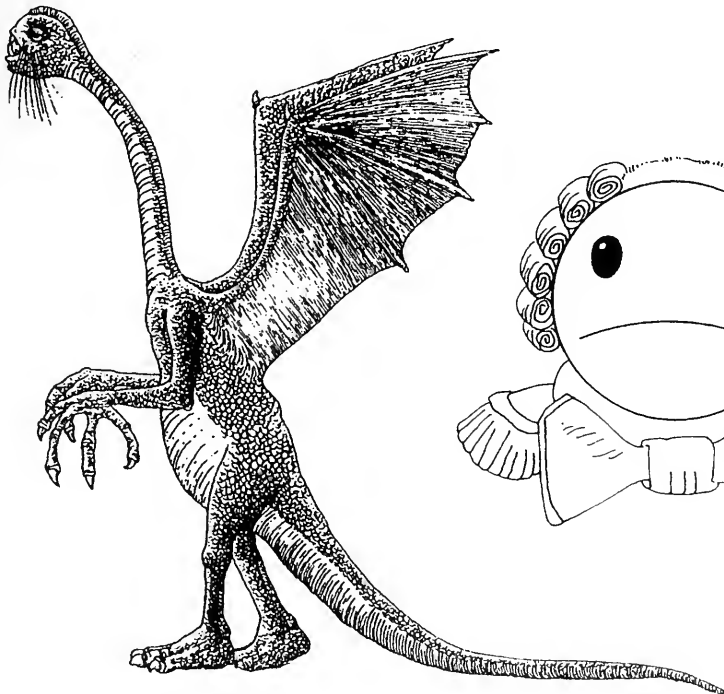
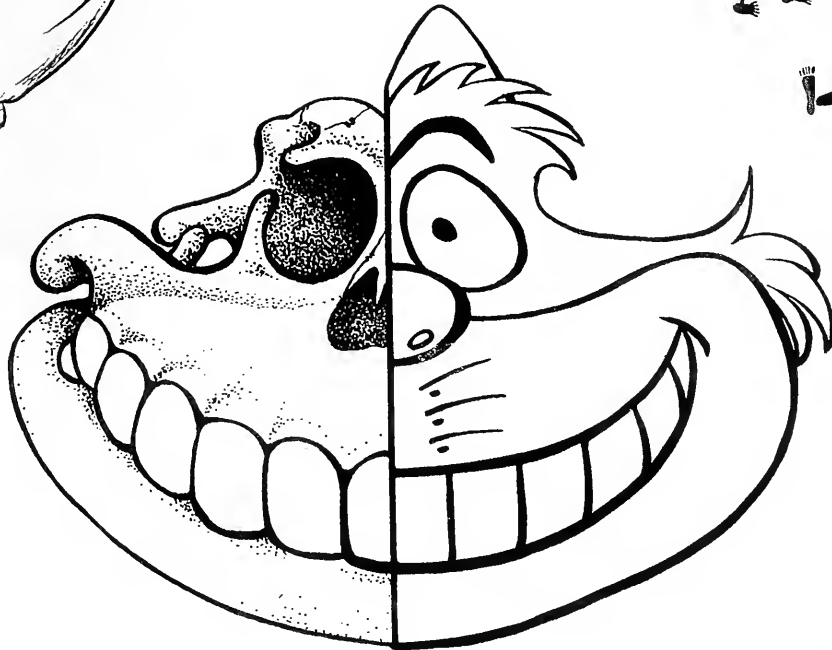
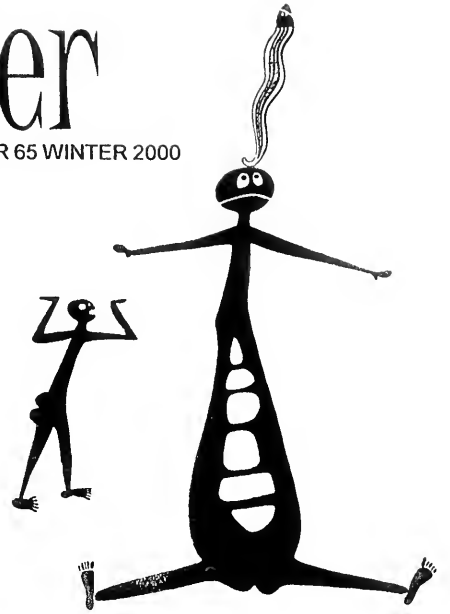
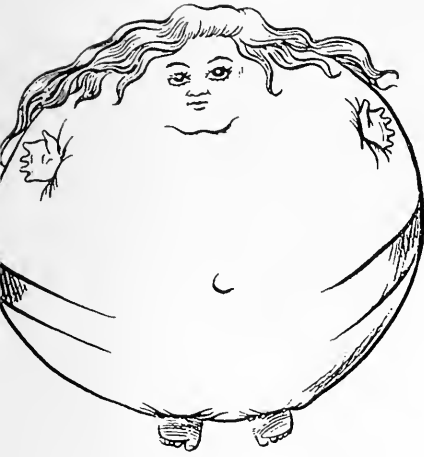


Knight Letter

THE LEWIS CARROLL SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA NUMBER 65 WINTER 2000



An Austin-tatiously Glorious Time

Lewis Carroll at Texas? Why, there's even a book by that name!¹ Austin resident Alan Tannenbaum, together with Stephanie Lovett, arranged for a spectacular weekend deep in the heart of Texas, centered around the fabulous holdings of the University of Texas at Austin (UTA).

On Friday, October 27th, the festivities began with the eighth Maxine Schaefer Memorial reading and book distribution taking place in a classroom of Rodriguez Elementary school in southwest Austin. About 45 children, mostly of Hispanic background, were treated to a reading of "Pig and Pepper" by Lena Salins, Ellen Schaefer-Salins, Edward Wakeling, Selwyn Goodacre, and Joel Birenbaum. A dinner that night was held at the Mirabelle restaurant, with all invited. The legendary Byron Sewell (below) read a hilarious parody called "The Mock Bison" from his *Alice's Adventures in Banff*. The board met afterward, which lasted well into the night, as they discussed the Spring 2001 gathering, which will take place April 21st, 2001 at the Fales Library (of N.Y.U.) in New York and will feature talks by Morton Cohen (on collector Alfred Berol), Dr. Hugues Lebaillly, and Roberta Rogow (author of the C.L. Dodgson/Arthur Conan Doyle mystery stories).

The Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center (HRC) at UTA, which holds three very significant Carroll collections – the historically important Warren Weaver, the more modern Byron Sewell, and the Helmut Gernsheim of photographs and albums – was our gracious host for the Saturday gathering. The HRC had hosted our Fall 1985 convocation, and has been much in the Carrollian news recently for their "Reflections in a Looking-Glass" traveling exhibition of his photography.

Despite the difficulties in parking (due to a football game, which is Taken Very Seriously there²) and the early start time, there was a good turnout of about forty. An exhibit had been set up in the foyer, with samples of their holdings, including the 1865 "India" *AW* and Carroll's "Commonplace Book", which was housed, perversely, in the William H. Koester collection of Edgar Allen Poe, which may be the reason that nothing in that book had yet been published [until now - see facing page]. It includes many fascinating items, mainly to do with alphabets, codes and ciphers, but also some Chinese characters and other oddments that clearly interested Dodgson at the time. In 1856, for 1 February, Dodgson wrote in his diary: "Began a MS book for miscellaneous entries of anything worth remembering and referring to, which belongs to no special book." This is likely to be the referent.

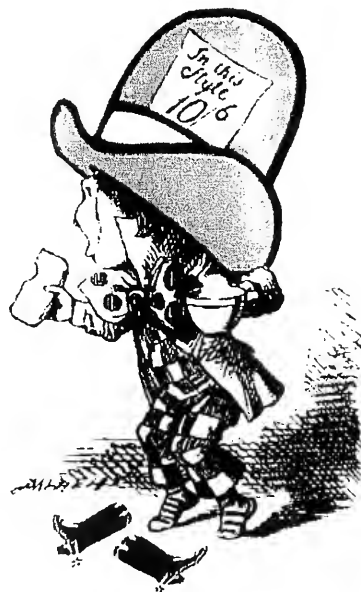
Other items included a publisher's dummy of *Euclid and His Modern Rivals* with CLD's handwritten marginal notes; letters; a copy of drawings made with his Electric Pen; and many fine samples of the assets in their collections (translations, photographs, manuscripts, etc.).

Our President Stephanie Lovett welcomed us and thanked Alan for all his hard work and hospitality. [Amen!] Cathy Henderson, Associate Librarian of the HRC gave us a brief overview of their incredible holdings of rare books and manuscripts. Although they specialize in 19th and 20th century literature, film, theater, and photography, their possessions (about 800,000 volumes and 37 million manuscripts!) range from incunabula and a Gutenberg Bible to the 21st century.

President *emeritus* Sandor Burstein gave a welcoming speech to Byron Sewell. The multitalented Byron (who studied art for three years at UTA) has written, illustrated, and published many dozens of outrageously delightful *Alice*-themed works over the last quarter-century through his "Chicken Little's Press", the LCSNA, and various commercial publishers. A few highlights must suffice here – his illustrated *Snark* with "concertina"-style folds, his brilliant bilingual *AWs* in Pitjantjatjara (aboriginal Australian) and Korean, the two issues of *Scientific Alician*, and his decades-long compendium of the American *AW* editions through 1960, *Much of a Muchness*. Listing his manifold contributions to our world would be nigh-to-impossible, but August Imholtz has spent many months

compiling an "interim" bibliography – "interim" as Byron is still creating his fabulous works – which is called *Enough of a Muchness* and was distributed as a keepsake to members in attendance. Byron, a chemical engineer and father of two young girls, has been away from the Carrollian world for a spell, and so was "welcomed back with extreme delight and joy", as Sandor put it, a sentiment shared by all, especially as he was with us in person.

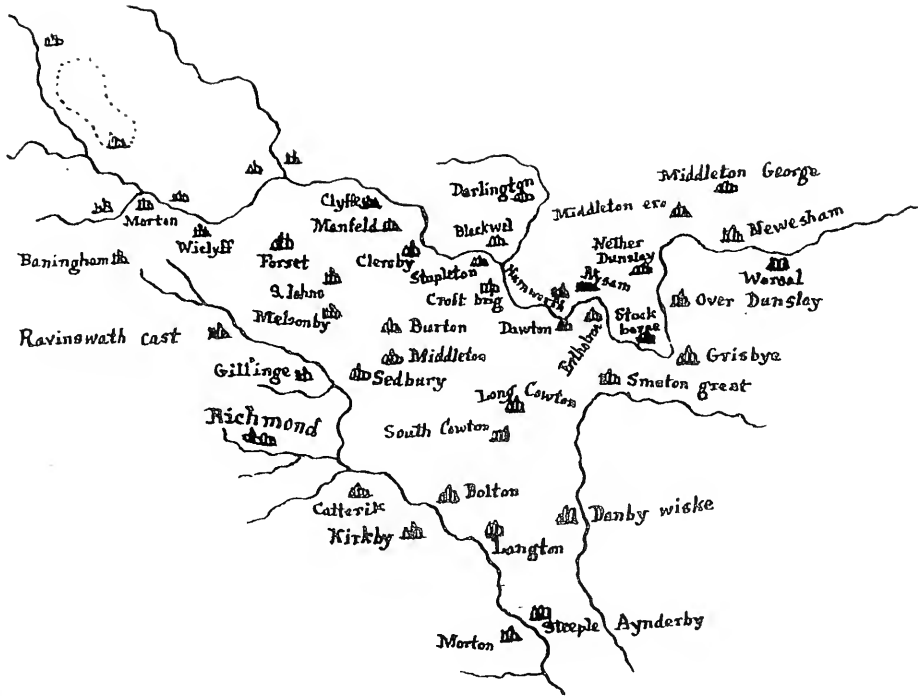
Our first lecture was by Roy Flukinger, Senior Curator of the HRC Photography and Film Collection. His fine talk "After Words", speaking on the place of photography in Dodgson's life and his place in the early years of the new art form, was an elaboration on his essay published as the "afterword" of the "Reflections" catalog (above). "Throughout his writings, Dodgson characterized photography as many things: art, pastime, recreation, hobby, profession, devotion, entertainment, fascination, practice, chief interest, and his 'one amusement'." Flukinger dealt with the dichotomy of the medium – a blend of art and hard



suspect the dulness than the unreasonableness of the Beast."

In this extract I have underlined those words which are in italics in the original; not the least remarkable part of it being, the author's peculiar notions of emphasis. The parenthesis-mark followed by (?) does not occur in the original.

17.



18.

羊

YANG.
"a sheep."

五

WOO.
"the hand."

化

HWA.
"change."

圓

LUN.
"a circle."

谷

HO.
"a joint."

公

URK.
"a plant."

science – and its “inevitable” attraction to the similarly-conflicted CLD; the place of commercial printers in his work; the province of cropping, retouching, and hand-coloring; and the importance of his photograph albums. Thirty-three were sold after his death; today only thirteen are of known whereabouts, five of them in the HRC collection. Roy concluded poetically “As any photographer who has slipped beneath the dark cloth and focused a portion of the world upon its ground glass can tell you, the eloquent mirror of the lens inverts and reverses that world – optically, mathematically, and magically. As the Rev. Charles L. Dodgson posed his subjects and viewed them through his lens he created his own special world and, emerging from the dark cloth as Lewis Carroll, brought back for all of us many special faces, scenes, and dreams from that wondrous dimension: where light and life, alongside imagination and truth, can flourish as they did within his very soul.”

A short break enabled us to examine the exhibit more carefully.

Edward Wakeling, scholar, collector, editor of Carroll’s complete *Diaries*, chairman of the Editorial Board of the LCS (UK)’s journal, *The Carrollian*, began his talk “Bringing Lewis Carroll’s Photography into Better Focus” with a list of forty-two or so questions, which he began to answer over the course of his fascinating lecture. (Fortunately for those not present, Edward’s vast knowledge will be available next year in a book containing 400 lesser-known CLD photographs, which he has written with photographic historian Roger Taylor, and is scheduled to be published by Princeton University Press next October.) Wakeling “just happened” to have his four-week resident Research Fellowship at the HRC overlap with this meeting.

Wakeling estimates Dodgson to have taken three thousand pictures during his twenty-five year photographic career. Dodgson’s register of them, indexed by the numbers which he scratched on the negative plates, has most unfortunately been lost. Wakeling, with the help of modern database techniques, is in the process of re-creating it, and has over fifteen hundred images identified by date, sitter, and so on, correcting many of the past errors in other volumes. Other data are forthcoming, but whether we will ever have the complete *catalogue raisonné* of all his images is doubtful. Fortunately, the aforementioned volume will include a listing of all *known* images.

Edward told some anecdotes about the “jigsaw puzzle” he was solving, including the identification of an album by “R.S” which came into his hands as it had a picture of CLD. Wakeling identified it as the work of Reginald Southey, CLD’s great friend who had taught him the art. Edward, ever the collector, attempted to downplay its significance and purchase it outright, but was turned down and it eventually sold at auction for £23,500. Happily, it was then donated to Princeton.

Edward’s collaborator, Roger Taylor, sees three distinct periods in Dodgson’s work: an early one of learning and mild experimentation; the Badcock’s Yard studio years with its Pre-Raphaelite ideals; and the Tom Quad studio with

more posed, deliberate portraiture and *tableaux*. They estimate that 30% of Dodgson’s photos are of adults, 6% of his own family, 4% of scenery, and 10% miscellaneous still-lives and so on. Half of his *oeuvre* were therefore of children. There are only 30 of the Liddells, 50 of Xie Kitchin, and about 30 nudes (1% of his total *oeuvre*) involving the children of eight families.

Edward compared the work in the two studios, discussed CLD’s composition, his commercial outings, and his reasons for giving up the art form [*the letter Wakeling cited as the best evidence was published in the Knight Letter 57, page 4*]. He concluded his talk: “Photography became an extravagance that could be put aside. Yet we have an opus of work at the birth of photography covering a quarter of a century that has stood the march of time and established Dodgson as a foremost photographer of his age.”

Next, August Imholtz, representing the nominating committee (Ellie Luchinsky, Janet Jurist, and himself), proposed the following slate of officers for the next two years:

President: Stephanie Lovett
Vice-President: Mark Burstein
Treasurer: Francine Abeles
Secretary: Cindy Watter
Directors: Pat Griffin and Germaine Weaver (no relation to Warren)

They were formally elected by acclamation without noticeable opposition.

We then went downstairs for lunch, where another exhibit had been prepared from the Sewell collection.

Our postprandial activity was a panel on Warren Weaver (1894-1978) – collector, pioneer cyberneticist, and author of the seminal *Alice in Many Tongues* – whose Carroll collection resides at the HRC. Moderator Charlie Lovett acquired, from Weaver’s daughter, an album containing fifty years of Weaver’s correspondence and so was able to quote generously therefrom. “From my early childhood I was interested in acquiring, reading, and hoarding books. I still have a tattered and soiled copy of *AW* which has, on the reverse of the frontispiece, a stamped notice (how proud I was of that rubber stamp) ‘Warren Weaver, No. 1’. It was the first book I owned and it has, with me, held a preferred position ever since.”

Weaver’s journey continued through the California Institute of Technology and the University of Wisconsin, where he became Professor of Mathematics – but more importantly (for us) found a small “elementary discussion of a dull topic in Algebra” in a catalogue which he bought “for a dollar or two” from a dealer who did not remember that the “C.L.Dodgson” who had inscribed it was a rather important personage.

Over the next thirty-five years, Weaver would become a foundation executive. “As one of the directors of the Rockefeller Foundation, it was part of my business to travel very widely. And this, with the accompanying chance to drop into the shops of book dealers in dozens of countries, together with my professional interest in the

problems of translating from language to language, led me to concentrate on the translations of *Alice*.” He also recruited book scouts from among his colleagues, including several Nobel laureates.

Weaver’s interest in machine translation dates at least back to 1947, and his *The Mathematical Theory of Communication* (1949, with Claude Shannon), is considered a cornerstone of information age thought. His publications on scientific and mathematical topics are considerable.

A letter to a professor of English at UTA dated 2 February 1965 begins “I have a large Carroll collection, containing roughly fifty presentation copies and many, if indeed not most, of the more rare items. In particular I have a very special presentation copy of the 1866 Macmillan *Alice*, both variants of the Appleton 1866, and a copy, in original binding, of the excessively rare 1865... At the age of 71 I am beginning to wonder what is going to happen to this collection!”. This was the beginning of what became Harry Ransom’s purchase of the collection and its eventual home in the building in which we were sitting. The price for the treasures he had accumulated over fifty years – including the 1865 “India” *Alice* – was (hold on to your hats) \$65,000. And Warren lived another thirteen years.

Weaver’s rôle as a mathematician and expositor of modern science was next discussed by Fran Abeles. At his death, CLD left a box of 62 mathematical packets, which was eventually purchased by Morris Parrish in 1929. Weaver was asked to look over this *Nachlaß*. Dodgson’s emphasis on axioms and logic in his development of topics was at odds with the more applied approach Weaver favored, a difference that contributed to his underestimation of CLD’s prowess in this field. Weaver’s paper was initially published in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*.⁴

Dr. Abeles identified and presented a few important but hitherto unpublished major pieces from this collection, and chose a few unusual problems and methods for us to enjoy. Among the former are a book on “Circle Squaring” aimed at discouraging dilettantes; one on a theory of parallel lines that would include geometric infinitesimals; a second book on determinants; and a system of memorizing logarithms, making use of his “Memoria Technica”. Among the latter were a rule for computing interest in days, a new method for multiplying by a decimal greater than .5, and methods for rapid computation, which enabled him to calculate the value of π^n in fourteen minutes.

August Imholtz then took the lectern for a look at what most of us know Warren Weaver for – translation – in a talk entitled “Warren and the Pirates” for reasons which may become clear later. Weaver’s book *Alice in Many Tongues*, published in 1964 by the University of Wisconsin Press, has become “a classic work on a classic book”. The genesis of the book can be traced back to a letter Weaver wrote in January, 1961, to a gentleman in Kenya stating “I have agreed to read a paper, in March, before the Rowfant Club in Cleveland (one of the very good literary clubs of this country) on some aspect of *AW*. And I have decided to

use the title ‘Alice in the Tower of Babel’.”

The book begins with three chapters introducing the idea of the “universal child”; a biography of CLD; and the history of *AW*. It then discusses the early translations in CLD’s lifetime (and CLD’s views on the subject), examines the dilemmas of translation (and specifically why this book is so problematic), and ends with a table of 42 (!) languages.

Weaver illustrated the difficulties by performing an experiment: he took a dozen translations of a passage from the Mad Tea Party (containing “one parodied verse, three puns, one invented word, one logical joke, and eight instances of what he called ‘twists’”), sent them to native speakers who had a perfect command of English, and asked them to translate it back without, of course, consulting the original. (An analogy was made to the way Dodgson derived his famous pseudonym by translating his name into Latin and back.)

Imholtz illustrated this with the double-translation from the Swahili, translated originally by Sister Ermytrude, and read from her correspondence with Weaver. August presented the results of an informal survey he did of some present-day collectors and found that today Alice exists in at least twice, perhaps thrice, as many languages as Weaver’s 42 count, depending on how one defines “language” (do dialects count? Gregg shorthand?), “translation” (do abridgements or retellings count?) and so on.

He explained the title of his talk – a reference to Milt Caniff’s “Terry and the Pirates” comic strip (Warren Weaver, inveterate traveler, making the world safe for democracy in his work with the Rockefeller foundation); also pirates often “melt down and recast their booty”, a good metaphor for the work of the translator; and the thrill collectors share with buccaneers in finding treasure.

August then attempted to read an excerpt in Swahili (“Popo pop unang aje/Niabie wafanyaje?” – “Twinkle, Twinkle, little bat”), as Charlie did in Pidgin. Fortunately no native speakers of either were present.



William Jay Smith, Sandor Burstein, Byron Sewell

A keepsake entitled *Warren Weaver: Scientist, Humanitarian, Carrollian; With a Bibliography of the Lewis Carroll Publications of Warren Weaver*, edited by Charlie Lovett, and containing the essences of these three talks, was also distributed to those in attendance.

William Jay Smith, now eighty-two, published his first book of poems in 1947, inaugurating a long and distinguished career producing more than fifty books of poetry, children's verse, translations, essays, criticism, anthologies and memoirs. He has taught at both Williams and Hollins, has served from 1968 to 1970 as Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress (a post now called Poet Laureate), and is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. As a student at Washington University, Smith was a founder of a Poetry Society (along with his friend Tom, later known to the world as "Tennessee", Williams) and earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree in French literature.

It was altogether fitting that Mr. Smith was a beneficiary of the Stan Marx Memorial lectureship, as Stan, one of our founders and our first President, was a dear friend of his. Smith's subject was "Lewis Carroll as Poet: Dream and Nightmare?"

He began with Carroll's boyhood dream to "wander through/ the wide world/ and chase the buffalo." The buffalo was an exotic beast back then, full of Wild West associations, and became emblematic for the young Charles, as he ventured out on his lifelong quest.

Smith

believes Carroll's serious and sentimental poems often ought to be consigned to oblivion; his example was "'Tis Love" from *Sylvie and Bruno*, a genre of Carroll's poetry which he found "particularly distressing and eminently forgettable". On the other hand were the "iridescent gems" of his nonsense and parodies. Smith read to us, and commented on, portions of "Father William", of which he said "the entire poem is a somersault" – the inversion of reality, the father/child reversal and the acrobatic clown of the title; "Jabberwocky", a poem of transformation (with a father/son reversal); and the "Snark", a satire of the Anglo-Saxon heroic sagas, again in which a father becomes a "bubbling babe" and in which Carroll opened an existential door to life's essential meaninglessness. Smith mentioned the poem's "apian heritage" (all those "B"s) and then discussed "The Aged, Aged Man" with its reappearance of the buffalo.

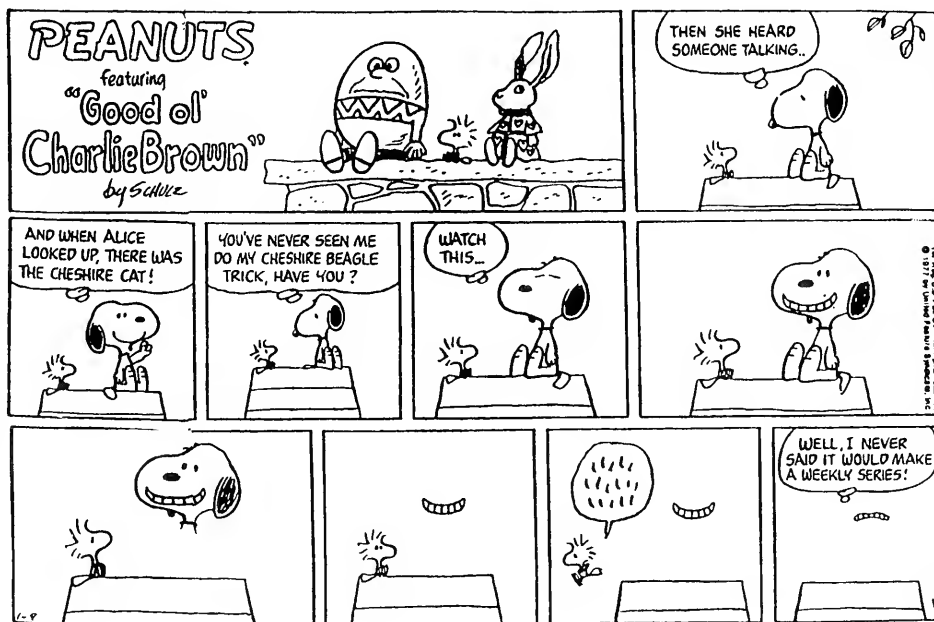
Smith noted that Wordsworth, in his poem "Resolution and Independence" (1807) which was the basis of that satire, contains the lines "We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;/ But thereof come in the end despondency

and madness." His conclusion? "Nonsense kept him sane."

We were then treated, by popular request, to Smith's lively reading of some of his own charmingly nonsensical works, including "Pidgin Pinch" and other selections from his books *Around My Room* and *Laughing Time*.

A few hours later, our hosts for a fabulous dinner and shmoozefest were Alison and Alan Tannenbaum. Young Charles Dodgson need search no more: a GARGANTUAN stuffed buffalo head dominated the Tannenbaum's Texas-sized living room! Dozens of little stuffed critters were everywhere one put one's feet (Alison is an amateur taxidermist), lending a properly surreal air. We were given plenty of opportunity to view Alan's extensive collection (one of the highlights of which was a Williams "Wonderland" pinball machine!).

After a delicious dinner of Alician-themed food and wonderful conversation, guests were presented with oysters shells with little feet glued on, and coasters advertising "Beamish" Irish stout. Then Selwyn Goodacre was most amusing in his brief



talk. He spoke of the abysmal poverty of his memory, in fact once failing to recognize his own daughter when she came to the door having recently had her hair cut. Nonetheless, he was immediately able to identify the previously unknown (but theorized) sixth variant of the rejected "Sixty Thousand" People's Edition in Alan's collection. We collectors certainly applaud his sense of priority, and thus inspired, rode off into the Texan sunset.

1. *Lewis Carroll at Texas*, Carroll Studies #8, published by the HRC in 1985 and distributed by the LCSNA is a catalog of their materials, and includes Warren Weaver's essay "In Pursuit of Lewis Carroll"
2. The UTA Longhorns "stomped" the hapless Baylor Bears (of Waco) 48-14
3. Visit them virtually at www.hrc.utexas.edu.
4. Vol. 98 No. 5, 15 October 1954

Well, You Know, ...

Martin Gardner writes:

James B. Hobbs, professor *emeritus* of business administration and associate dean *emeritus* of the College of Arts and Sciences at Lehigh University in Bethlehem PA, recently called my attention to an aspect of both *Alice* books that I had not noticed before. He was struck by the unusual frequency with which Alice and 23 other of her companions needlessly interject “you know” into their conversations.

In recent years, the use of “you know” in the United States has become a compulsion among many young people, athletes, talk-show hosts and their guests. In some cases, it seems impossible for them to utter a sentence without interjecting “you know”. Although unlikely that American children picked up the habit merely from reading the *Alice* duad, the question arises: Was this a common practice of dialogue in Carroll’s day? Or might another explanation exist?

First the facts; then two conjectures. Alice needlessly interjects “you know” 31 times in the two volumes. (The twenty times the phrase was used as a question or as a declarative statement are excluded.) The phrase is used a total of 86 times in the two books: five times each by the White Knight, Humpty Dumpty, and the Red Queen, and four times by the White Queen. Nineteen other characters use the phrase between one and three times. After being confronted with so many “you knows”, it was most gratifying to observe the Caterpillar’s retort in *Wonderland* to Alice bemoaning her changing size so often, “you know”: “I don’t know!”

Hobbs also tabulated the frequency that “you see” is used by Alice and her companions in the two volumes. Although Alice uses this phrase only twice – once in conversation, again with Caterpillar, where he says: “I don’t see!” – the White Knight uses it eight times, the narrator seven, and seven other characters once or twice. Total “you see” interjections is 26. A third phrase, “of course”, is used 35 times: six by Mock Turtle, four by Humpty Dumpty, and between once and three times by 15 other characters (including Alice thrice).

Two conjectures arise as to why Carroll interjected these three phrases so frequently. *One*: such phrases might have been the norm in talking with or between small children, particularly little girls, during the middle and late 19th centuries. *Two*: (and Hobbs suggests the more plausible) Carroll (or C.L.Dodgson) was a teacher/professor and a logician/mathematician. Instructors frequently use “you know” and “you see” to clarify (hopefully or in fact) the point under discussion. And it is also not uncommon to emphasize a point (whether complex or “simple”) with an “of course” thrown in. To boot, bred into the logician/mathematician is the discipline to develop detailed proofs for theorems and constructs, which are often terminated with the super-flourish: “*obviously* such and so is the conclusion or insight!” Nary an “obvious” appears in either tome, suggesting that Carroll may have replaced a natural (or

trained) tendency to use the word with the less harsh and intimidating “you know”, “you see” or “of course”.

I would greatly appreciate learning if the frequency of these three phrases has been noticed by other Carroll scholars, and if so, their thoughts on the matter.

[*There was also a chart tabulating the characters and the occurrences of these phrases.*

An eMail forwarded to Edmund Weiner, the Principal Philologist of OED, inquiring about the correct rhetorical term for unwarranted interjections received this reply:

“I think the traditional word is ‘expletive’, defined by OED as ‘serving merely to fill out a sentence, help out a metrical line, etc.’ I think that in modern grammar a more accurate term is ‘filler’, defined by the Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar as ‘A word, usually outside the syntax of an adjoining clause, that serves to fill what might otherwise be an unwanted pause in conversation.’ Another term for this is ‘pragmatic particle.’”]



There have been three "Tumtum Tree"s inserted into the most recent three "Knight Letter"s. Yet no one seems willing to do with them what was intended: to pass them along to children. Please, if you don't want to use the original page, just photocopy it!

Addenda, Errata, and Illuminata

The article entitled “Hidden Treasure” in *KL* 64, p.18 took as its source some of the earliest dispatches regarding the discovery of Carroll’s last letters. A sentence read, in part, “The final letter... with which he sent a plum cake...” was corrected in later reports to “...with which Dodgson enclosed a copy of *The Lost Plum Cake*, a children’s book written by his niece E.G. Wilcox.”

Quiz:

What is the meaning and relevance of this poem?

*Un petit d'un petit
S'étonne aux Halles
Un petit d'un petit
Ah! Degrés te fallent
Indolent qui ne sort cesse
Indolent qui ne se mène
Qu'importe un petit d'un petit
Tout Gai de Reguennes.*

Hint: fluency in French is not necessary; in fact a positive handicap. Answer on p.18.

Poet Stephanie Bolster: Alice After *Alice*

Chloe Nichols

"Imagine her this way, imagine her that way: these portraits allow Alice to change, to step outside the frame of Wonderland..." – Sue Sinclair

"...this curious child was very fond of pretending to be two people."

I. "Alice – Poet"

When I was younger – much – it was trendy to have several actors play the same role in Shakespeare, simultaneously. They stood for different dimensions of the character – son, lover, sidekick, and so on. You had choral soliloquies. Stage doors widened; Othello doubled or tripled as his own honor guard. It got so you couldn't tell an intimate death scene from a battlefield. Yet, somehow, either in spite of the inevitable chaos – or because of it – the real Hamlet did truly occur. Coalesce.

In the same way, in the work of a young Canadian poet, Stephanie Bolster, Alice Liddell also materializes by multiplication, though with much less ado. Maybe that happens because poetry's stage is naturally larger than drama's; or maybe it's because this particular poet, even so early in her career, already has what it takes to make the difficult look easy.

Now, I only recently stumbled (by good fortune and the suggestion of friends, among them Ian Lancashire) across Stephanie Bolster. She had published *White Stone*, a collection about Alice, in 1998, and is now Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at Concordia University in Montreal. Very graciously, Bolster agreed to an e-mail interview for the *Knight Letter*.

"She cannot move unless her double move" [*sic*] – a line about Alice by Allen Tate reminded me of the ambiguity in her – this ordinary/extraordinary child: is she adrift or detached? intrepid or implacable? Carroll suggests the divisions are deliberate, even antagonistic: "trying to box her own ears... this curious child was very fond of pretending to be two people." In Stephanie Bolster's work, I saw at once a way to touch and move, even manipulate, Alice, for Bolster, far from leaving her in Wonderland, locates her at many times and places – in the major moments of Alice's own real-life; in the poet's personal epiphanies; or set against characters real or fictional, and separate from either of them. In one poem she even becomes "The Poet as Nine Portraits of Alice".

Just as astonishing as finding Alice so variously staged was Bolster's unintrusive accuracy. Here was someone approaching the "curious child" with almost pediatric thoroughness – someone kind, undivided; no ear-boxer here – whom I could *like*, and someone who *did* like Alice – her friend but not her follower. All of this marks Bolster's first book, *White Stone*. Carroll fans will recognize in that name the classical watchword Charles Dodgson used in his diary to record his favorite days. I was impressed with Bolster's instinctive honesty.

Some general criticism of Bolster's work is

available, and she has other publications, among them a brief portfolio of poems about paintings, *A Tent of Skin*, for the Canadian National Gallery. In 1999 she published a second book, *Two Bowls of Milk*. Bolster has a pretty and convenient site on the Internet, copyrighted to the University of Toronto (<http://www.library.utoronto.ca/canpoetry/bolster/write.htm>). There you can find a brief *vita*, a discussion by the poet, and some criticism. A few of her most frequently discussed poems are linked to that site. *White Stone* is published by Véhicule Press, and the homepage gives the address. Her critics tend to study either the poet herself or her individual poems – overlooking, in my view, valuable questions about craft and technique, the questions Bolster asks herself. For this poet, more than most, is drawn through her own material to examine her intention, so the unifying interplay of that work is important. "By placing Alice within my own place and time, I was able to see that here and now were every bit as rich, nonsensical and distressing as both Wonderland and Victorian England." She goes on, "Increasingly, I wrote about 'the real Alice', whose life, as I grew up through writing about her, seemed far more fascinating than the life of a child in an imaginary world."

The entire collection of her poems seems designed to form one organic whole. Thoughtfully specific poem titles and the highly organized table of contents carefully guide the reader through a consistent whole. Every poem becomes both text and context – it is a remarkable achievement and proof of her inclusiveness. The title is *White Stone*, not *White Stones*. Still, the homepage is excellent for showing at a glance the breadth of her subject matter and approach, and her easy, even-handed precision. Her style is spare, exact, reaching, and lightly laced with wit. Carroll would have liked it.

Since Bolster's star is still new, it may be natural that published criticism is sadly uneven, and can even be dismissive and patronizing. *Time Magazine's* Katherine Govier, cataloging Canadian poets, identifies Bolster as dispassionate, bloodless, with a "maidenly archness" – "a cool, academic poet... seeking inspiration in things as they strike her eye." Bolster's "great refinement" is finally too "ethereal" to satisfy. My guess is that Govier, working only with the nine poems of *A Tent of Skin*, has overlooked the layered unity of the Alice-centered writing. For, although Bolster had already taken important prizes before its publication, *White Stone* brought her highest acclaim and the most noteworthy honor to date, the Canadian Governor General's Award in 1998. Critic Douglas Barbour praises a "documented" approach which both remains true to Alice's biography and "introject(s) the writer". Sue Sinclair calls the collection "multi-layered, multi-textured," and the true Alice "essentially elusive". The link, in her view, is loneliness; Alice's own connects to the "loneliness that seems to belong to the poet" and results in a "particular and specific relationship to the Alices."

Bolster is not alone in this feeling.

Alice Pleasance Liddell Hargreaves – child, woman, symbol, myth – continues to attract serious writers

and illustrators in surprising numbers. Even the initial popularity of *Alice* inspired a rage of children's works of outright imitation and parody, some so crammed with morals that the Duchess might have written them. Alongside Alice's first conquest, Charles Dodgson, modern creators treating her include Lewis Padgett, Joyce Carol Oates, poet Allen Tate, filmmakers Dennis Potter and Jan Svankmajer.

Bolster sees in her many Alices a network of paths – into Wonderland, Victorian England, contemporary society, Greek myth – and as well, into herself, her art. Alice has been a focusing lens. She is “very multiple for me: grandmother, mother, sister, child, friend – she is the women in my life, real and imagined.” Yet, although *White Stone* is only a couple of years old, Bolster also calls her journey complete, “She is still alive for me, but her heart, unknown to me, is absent.” It is a little as if Dante had discharged Beatrice before finishing the tour of heaven. Of all the volume's surprises, this is the strangest, for her break with Alice is more announced than explained: “She is / nowhere... Who did I dream I'd find?” Bolster implies (to me it seems) that she simply passed through Alice like a train corridor, glancing out windows. And nothing in the book's closing, breaking-off poems, suggests that the Alice who had fascinated her from childhood initiated the rift.

Alice's boldness first attracted Bolster. Her own childhood was timid: “In Grade One I weep myself / waist-deep in tears.” She shares Alice's girlhood more convincingly than her years of marriage and motherhood – natural, in a young woman. At every point, though, Bolster lets Alice set the pace for both of them. When Alice is old, Bolster is old. When Alice lands in a modern kitchen like a flattened parcel, Bolster mothers her with Canadian muffins. Yet, ironically, there is also a sense of danger – a barbarian waif turned vandal, impossible to tame. Along with a sense of bonding – “I felt temperamentally connected to Alice” – there is also a trace of mutual captivity, “I've been wedged a long time in the sad narrows / between her and me.” Could Alice have been fighting free? In time, the poet seems to have realized, “I was really writing my own Alice.” Whatever Alice has brought to Bolster, she has not entirely blessed her.

Although the poet spent years researching the real-life Alice, she may be at her best when she gives up the documentary approach, and introduces Alice into strange company. “Portrait of Alice with Elvis” makes lovers of two lonely idols with only their fame in common. Their bi-cultural castle is also their prison: “In sleep / their tear-blotched faces could be anyone's.” Bolster thinks this poem's fame has grown out of proportion; she could be right. Graceland and Wonderland don't speak the same language – not enough of it. Elvis and Alice may be too vulnerable for each other. A better match, I believe, is achieved in “Portrait of Alice with Christopher Robin”. In a snowy Hundred Aker Wood, Christopher Robin and Alice, naked, share intimacy beside a fire, pointing to “figures in the smoke – / lumpen bear, white rabbit”. This friendship clicks, and the couple become gently appealing in each other's arms.

II. “Poet – Don”

The nearer to Alice, the farther from Carroll.

Although she touches only lightly on Dodgson's assumed infatuation – “Spring everywhere threatening to open them both: tense in that unfurling garden, during the long exposure” – Bolster gives him no lover's warmth; she seems most comfortable with Alice when she has loosened his grip, blurred his focus. As Sue Sinclair says, the poet wants to “step outside the frame of Wonderland”; to do this, she must block Carroll's possessiveness. It does not help for Alice to be so – apparently – docile.

Indeed, few also-real characters in literature respond to their author's bidding as willingly as Alice Liddell drops into the world of Lewis Carroll – while also leaving a dossier of a real-world life. Although the title *White Stone* locates the book by implication in Dodgson's diary shorthand for good fortune, the poet keeps their connection carefully low-key. Bolster does not linger long in Alice's deanery-garden childhood below Carroll's window. She hurries her adolescence, even announces her first period, possibly because Carroll cannot follow her across that threshold. *White Stone* may be, under its many versions of Alice's life, a catalog of adolescent potential as she physically matures – like “an English Landscape” or the Caterpillar's chrysalis, or as a challenge to Victoria. In fact, teenage themes overshadow those of maturity. For Bolster, Alice is the girl at once exploring herself and rejecting maturity, uncomfortable in her own body. As the mouse-swimmer, “she cannot sleep for the hiss of her breath / and for who she'll become.”

Bolster, who knows Alice as well as any other artist since her storyteller, also seems to share with Carroll the will to possess the dreamchild. Taking up Alice most seriously at the age when Carroll put her down, she pursues her with equal fervor, and afterward, again with parallel emotions, also to put her down. Alice takes on the handled look of a communal nursery doll. She faded into a sort of “pen-pal to whom I was very close as an adolescent and young adult; we haven't corresponded for years ... but the bond ... (still defines) who I am.” Two artists share one pattern: initial enthusiasm, pursuit, devotion, a sudden, implicit kind of no-fault divorce, followed quickly by a sort of nostalgia close to indifference, gladly embraced. The trappings get in the way, and Bolster never really accepts Alice's presence as wholeheartedly as she accepts her absence. Carroll only bonds with her in flashback, the scene on the Isis. Both are careful to declare it. Alice seems to divert people – fictional or not – out of their present, and into her past or future. Elusive, she even slides out of Tenniel's hands, leaving him to pose a substitute model no more like her than Thumbkin is like Ring Man.*

Bolster could only have withdrawn from Alice for one of two reasons: either one outgrew the other, or one broke off with the other. Given that Bolster quite openly takes the entire range of Alice's life past infancy as her subject, it ought to be the second; and given that Bolster's first impulse as a poet is to (very lightly) embrace and (very

delicately) explore, I put the blame on Alice. Consider: Alice's only known intimate is a cat. Alice has no companions, no confidences, no cozy chats. Her conversations are no more intimate than mutual cross-examination. Most she breaks off herself. As her own double, she boxes her own ears. The Alice which Carroll created is a loner, an abandoner, always on the move. Her only panic in either book occurs in the White Rabbit's dressing room, where she cannot move at all. Although she leaves the impression that she has been deserted, she does all the deserting. It may be Alice's habit of emotional vanishing that the Cheshire Cat represents and even the White Knight's affection cannot overcome. Though Stephanie Bolster, like Carroll, also creates fictions to catch her heroine, in the end she too finds that Alice has vanished.

III. "Alice – Alice"

"One of my deepest fears is of being watched from a perspective exactly like my own, by someone who 'sees through me'..." – Bolster

Though Wonderland's fantasy inspires some of her best work, Bolster prefers Alice consistently real, from romantic girlhood – when, as a poem shows, she may have been linked with a prince – to a womanhood of lackluster respectability. Though working at Alice's elbow and often with her own key emotions, the poet still manages never to intrude or pose her subject. However, she does take great liberties with Alice's backdrops – childbed, marriage bed, Dodgson's funeral. She is looking for a path out of herself. "I wanted to write about someone other than myself... my own inner life wasn't sufficiently valid material ... the kind of material I wanted to publish ... I saw (in Carroll's Alice) a spunky young girl who knew her mind and spoke it." Eventually Alice came to be all of "the women in my life, real or imagined... the historical Alice is the restrained part of myself, the part that wants to do the right thing." Bolster seems, then, to have used Alice as a mirror to groom her own possible selves, and she seems most convincing where experiences are more likely shared. Her childbed poem – "three sons churned like butter in your guts" – has its unconvincing moments.

If Bolster's true Alice moves away from her, her pictures remain like wallet-size snapshots. The photography binding Alice to Bolster and Carroll is one of *White Stone's* major themes. Carroll appears as his own subject; young Alice glowers into Carroll's camera; Bolster poses / is posed through several rites of passage. Briefly, the poet shows Carroll groping (maybe) the child with chemical-stained hands, and in more detail, places herself and Alice together in his darkroom developing the famous "beggar child" picture, where he does not "unlatch her collar", yet finally dunks Bolster in emulsifiers. Julia Margaret Cameron's photographs, which first gave Bolster a sense of the real Alice, present an unraveling matron, her hair "brittle / as last year's nests". The camera also becomes Alice's trap: "Today the shutter's snapped you in." Gradually, though, Carroll the manipulator fades as Bolster's own authority

grows stronger, the camera hides more than it shows, and finally eradicates an Alice she has joined in old age: "(M)y aged / mind elsewhere, I leave the lens cap on: aim at you and photograph a blackness absolute."

The photography motif also points up two strengths surprising in a first book, Bolster's unity-in-flexibility, and her assured management of her speaking self. Commonly, she speaks directly to Alice, though on the other hand, she can become Alice and claim her central position. I said earlier – one of the fascinations of *White Stone* is its ready switches, subject to object, text to context. The necessary space between photographer and subject also allows a discreet control while screening subject from intrusion. Yet it is not clear whether Bolster realizes that however well manipulated, Alice may have taken charge, a presence outside acute fabrications, and that picture-taking allows control to flow in two directions. Carroll's famous "beggar child" picture suggests a covert, seductive control. Which is mistress?

Another striking facet of her book of poems is the gradual move from photographs to portraits, both of which are Bolster's specialties. Early in the book photographs are a major motif; later she gradually switches to portraits which seem to have been painted, and which include richer and richer detail, much from the extra-Alice, un-Alice natural world: Canadian beaches and lakes are suggested, stones throw interesting shadows. Toward the end of the book Alice herself has fits of shrinking and disappearing – a face on a milk carton, a mouse in the refrigerator. Finally, ending the picture-within-picture approach of photos and portraits, Bolster breaks off her scrutiny of Alice as Wonderland did – by enlarging her. Alice becomes her own universe, complete with stars. "This big, you can't be photographed."

After *White Stone*, Stephanie Bolster's work has taken a decided turn toward the textural, the here-and-now. Her work has put on a little weight, all muscle. Her pictures have become glimpses, and sparseness has relaxed into the richly commonplace: blackberry picking, sucking milk-wet fingers. No single image has risen to rivet her imagination – who could replace Alice? – but the world she writes in seems far more burgeoning, friendlier, less wary. This is the world of her second book, *Two Bowls of Milk*.

The last two poems of *White Stone* tell Alice goodbye. "Portrait of Alice as Her Own Universe" says "Of the advantages to death and myth, / this you have most deserved: space." And finally, turning Alice into a black hole, "Implode. In the black funnels / you will find all your variation." In the end Bolster realizes it might not have been Alice after all: "I let her history fall shut... Victoria's dead, this isn't England, and Alice was never ... that woman's face, looming in my dark room."

The question is: if it wasn't Alice, who was it? In all seriousness, Alice must be the queen of mistaken identity. Part of her leaves her own story, grows up, has adventures, grows and grows, invades films, fascinates poets, painters, people on the hunt for meaning – yet she also remains the little girl just stumbling into the rabbit hole. I

think the answer is that, in any form, she is only Lewis Carroll's creation – more accurately, a part of his creation. She is a living mirror, giving back all our images. Alice with her cool logic is a single rational alien always on the move through our unreasonable menagerie. Wonderland's opposite, she can reflect it but can never release its terrible tensions. Bolster, who is “drawn to borders, to edges where reality transforms,” found in Alice a balance point between mind and blankness where her poetic vision could materialize; but not take root.

The final truth of Alice is that she and Wonderland mutually repel. Carroll found that he could not combine his two worlds – the irrational chaos, the clear child-mind. As Bolster sees it, the real Alice also found this impossible. “The Alice we know, and the Alice I wrote about, is multiple, and yet, ultimately, a vacuum. She is the ‘white stone’ of the book title – undeniably present, but opaque, indecipherable... she’s a kind of black hole, or a white hole... absent, and replaced by a made thing... The Alice that comes down to us is the Alice of our own making.”

Late in *White Stone*, Bolster trades in the trapped dreamchild for an ordinary woman. The final poems are less mythic, more naturally textured. “Alice Lake” centers on a woman swimming rain-soaked among “anonymous plants, tentative and skeletal, rising from the water.” Considering Bolster’s at that time rather austere sparseness, even this touch of nature amounts to a lavish excursion. She seeks a new solidity. “The stone lays its shape / down with such assurance / you could weep.” Interestingly, it is Nature more than Alice which seems, at the end, to divide Bolster from Alice and reunite her with herself, “The woman (of Alice Lake) is only a pair of arms reaching the other shore and I am a pair of eyes touching only their own lids and this rain.” Only as Alice (the swimmer) recedes, can the poet come to terms with her own nature.

Thus this prize-winning and striking first book becomes a collection of possible / possibly-counterfeit, Alices, which finally draw together into a whole woman, who promptly takes her leave. Bolster goes from seeking to inventing to releasing Alice, and much of her achievement is the knowing touch which allows her to explore her subject throughout all these phases, all without trespassing – “unlatching her collar”. The development of this unintruding scrutiny is the most interesting quality of *White Stone*.

I never did find Alice; I stopped looking. Yet Bolster provided my key, not as much in her attachment (as I hoped) as in its painless breaking-off. That identified the one function of all the Alices – as a kind of gamepiece channeling attention by eluding it. The reality/fantasy game works only because Alice is always between moves. It’s a tired old phrase, but Bolster simply *outgrew* Alice: “her heart, unknown to me, is absent.”

* *Thumbkin and Ring Man* are the names of the thumb and the ring finger in a children’s rhyme set to the tune of “Frère Jacques”. - ed.

Serendipity

“My two nieces are very cute, five and three... Those are their names.”

~ guest Bill Braudis on
“Late Night with Conan O’Brien”



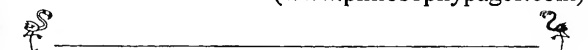
Harold Bloom, in discussing Oscar Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest*, states that its “...true affinities are with Lewis Carroll and with Gilbert and Sullivan...” and suggests that the play “is best read in close conjunction with the *Alice* books.” He concludes his essay with the statement, “If there is an afterlife, and people go on reading in it...I would want to hear Shakespeare reading aloud from *Through the Looking-Glass*.”

How to Read and Why
(Scribner, 2000)



Hypostasization: The variety of reification that results from supposing that whatever can be named or conceived abstractly must actually exist. When (in *Through the Looking-Glass*), his Messenger declares “I’m sure nobody walks much faster than I do,” the White King hypostasizes “Nobody” by responding that “He can’t do that, or else he’d have been here first.” Such philosophers as Plato, Hegel and Heidegger are sometimes accused of similar flights of ontological whimsy.

~ Garth Kemerling
Philosophical Dictionary
(www.philosophypages.com)



The multitude of the media’s quotations from, and references to, Carroll in the recent Bush/Gore “sustained election” Florida farce were far beyond measure; the most appropriate was from Chapter IX of *Looking-Glass*:

‘And you do Addition!’ the White Queen asked.
‘What’s one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one!’

‘I don’t know,’ said Alice. ‘I lost count.’

Leaves from the Deanery Garden

Dear Mr. Carroll,

Hello. My name is Alex. I am 9 years old. I like adventure and war books. I read a lot and had never read *Alice in Wonderland* until my class read it and I will never read it again in my whole life.

No offense, but I hated that book. You must be a very nice man because I've heard some of your letters. But you need a bit of spice in your book. It is just too plain for me. You need to have more adventure in your stories. Say instead of this: "She took the Orange Marmalade. It was empty. She put it down." It should be like this: "She's flying down the hole at breaknecking speed and she goes through the floor of the hole and hits a wild kind of spring and goes flying into the sky." That is what I think is descriptive.

But you have some good artists. I've got to give you credit for that. My favorites are Anthony Browne, Angel Dominguez, and Helen Oxenbury. Everyone in my class except me likes your book. We are all going to do illustrations for your book. I really look forward to doing this because I like drawing.

Good bye and don't forget, I don't like your book.

Sorriily,

Alex

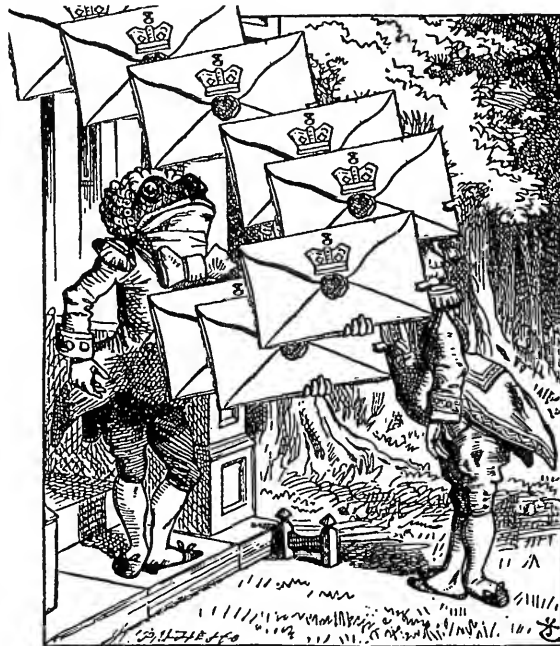


[The above is a letter from an activity Monica Edinger uses in a unit, based on AW, which she teaches at The Dalton School in New York, and is in her book/CD Seeking History: Teaching with Primary Sources in Grades 4-6 (Heinemann, 2000), 0-325-00265-7, \$22 - order from www.heinemann.com.]

May I share some thoughts regarding our [opera in progress] "Alice", and our including the character of Lewis Carroll, playing not only himself, but both the White Knight (obviously) in Act Two, and the Gryphon (less obviously) in Act One?

Did you ever wonder about the author's spelling of the word "gryphon?" When the adequate spelling would normally be "griffin", this strange choice stimulated my curiosity. Without having the *Annotated Alice* of Gardner to check, I looked elsewhere to a source from 1894. What reference might Dodgson/Carroll have had in his mind to employ this spelling? This citation is from Brewer's *The Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (p.558):

"Gryphon (in *Orlando Furioso*), son of Olivero and Sigismunda, brother of Aquilant, in love with Origilla, who plays him false. He was called White from his armour, and his brother Black. He overthrew the eight champions of Damascus in the tournament given to celebrate the king's wedding-day. While asleep Martano steals his armour, and goes to the King Noradino to receive the meed of high deeds. In the meantime Gryphon awakes, finds his armour gone, is obliged to put on Martano's, and, being mistaken for the coward, is hooted and hustled by the crowd. He lays about stoutly, and kills many. The king comes up, finds out the mistake, and offers his hand, which Gryphon, like a true knight, receives. He joined the army of Charlemagne."



Brewer also cites a spelling of "griffon" (as well as alternatives, "griffen" or "griffin") for the offspring of the lion and the eagle. The creature "kept guard over hidden treasures."

So there may have been, with the awareness that Dodgson/Carroll was so well versed in things folkloric and English and mythic, some *double entendre* in the employment of the spelling, for Gryphon also more than hints of the White Knight, as above. This character may symbolize therefore Carroll in another White Knight's guise, all the while valorously guarding "hidden" treasure.

Notice in *Orlando Furioso* that his love "plays him false," as did all the children in whom Carroll invested himself, by their growing into adulthood. "Who are you, Alice?" as he wrote, may have been much more of a query than we have come to think.

If this is mere circumstance between a Gryphon and White Knight, then I am impressed in the serendipities of life, and if it is his intended reference, then I am impressed again and again with the intellectual connections that seemed to rule his imagination and art. Either way, it is most interesting, don't you think?

Gary Bachlund



[Gryphon derives from the Greek γρυψ, whose adjectival form γρυπός means "curved, especially in the nose or beak", hence γρυπάετος (used in Aristophanes), a kind of griffin.]

I was surprised to see in your excellent Fall 2000 issue that John Tufail continues to think that Tenniel did not draw the Knave of Hearts in his frontispiece to *AW*, and on an inside illustration. Those little clubs on the Knave are traditional decorations on the Jack of Heart's tunic as he appears on English and American playing cards (enclosed). They appear only on the Jack of Hearts, so there is no question that Tenniel was drawing the Knave of Hearts. I suspect that what seem to be little clubs are intended to be clover. I sent a note on this to *Bandersnatch*.

Martin Gardner



Gardner's note was printed in *Bandersnatch* 108, along with comments by others. Dr. Tufail responded in 109.



Having just finished *KL* 64, I congratulate you for a magnificent production. Your recent issues have been splendid.

However, as an old curmudgeon whose history includes formal training in psychology, psychiatry, thanatology, logic and literature, I cannot refrain from believing that Dr. Chloe Nichols' "Goldfish, Death and the Maiden" is tilting at windmills. Dr. Tufail's essay in the same issue, "Language and Truth in *AW*" repeats many of the same formalistic errors. One wonders if there will ever be an end to psychologists' efforts to juggle facts to fit preconceived theories?

In contrast, Jonathan Dixon's "Dodgson's Adventures in Therapy" that follows takes observable facts, fits them into a theory and then *tests* it. His paper is therefore to be highly commended.

I suppose that we must accept the ridiculous along with the sublime in the guises of fairness or comprehensiveness. To publish pseudo-science or voodoo philosophies seems terribly wasteful.

Sandor Burstein
President *emeritus*, L.C.S.N.A.



i work for a small radio station and we are doing a report about Louis Carroll, but i need to know, hoe "Lutwidge" is correctly pronounced! Can you help me?

Rahmun (via eMail)

My word. Where to begin?



An Exchange

To: Writers & Research Group, "*Jeopardy!*"

On the show which aired last Friday, 15 September, in the category "Brit Lit" there was a question: "Referring to his 'Alice' books, this author said 'I'm afraid I didn't mean anything but nonsense.'" The given answer was Lewis Carroll, but unfortunately the "question" was not correct. The quoted line was *not* referring to his *Alice* books, but rather to his great nonsense poem "The Hunting of the Snark" (1876).

The well-known line is from an letter dated 18 August 1884 and addressed to Miss Rachel Lowrie (and her siblings). You will find it printed in *The Letters of Lewis Carroll*, ed. Morton Cohen and Roger Lancelyn Green, Oxford University Press, 1979, vol. I pp. 547 - 9. The exact line is "As to the meaning of the *Snark*? I'm very much afraid I didn't mean anything but nonsense!"

As you can imagine, I am a faithful watcher and admirer of your show!

Respectfully,

Mark Burstein
V.P., L.C.S.N.A.

Dear Mr. Burstein,

Thank you for your information about Lewis Carroll's quotation... We especially appreciate the primary documentation that shows Carroll referring to "The Hunting of the Snark" rather than to the *Alice* books, as we had stated on the air. As we prepare roughly fifteen thousand clues a year, we naturally have to rely on secondary sources, which in this case led us astray. Next time we run into a Carroll-related conundrum, rest assured that we will call on your expertise beforehand.

We hope you will continue to watch the show.

Sincerely,

The *Jeopardy!* Writing Staff

Dodgson, Docherty and MacDonald's *Lilith*

Karoline Leach

It has been pointed out by others that there are connections with Charles Dodgson built into the texts of several of George MacDonald's novels – particularly his strangest and most allegorical, *Lilith* (1895).

In a sense this isn't particularly surprising since the two men were for a time very close friends. Several of MacDonald's stories from the 1860s seem to echo Dodgson's serious poetry from the same time: the dream-worlds and alternative realities of *Phantastes* and *The Portent* recall Dodgson's 'Stolen Waters' and 'Faces in the Fire' as well as the *Alice* and *Sylvie and Bruno* books.

Like Anodos (hero of *Phantastes*), the protagonist of 'Stolen Waters' is seduced by a *femme fatale* and awakened to her true nature by a dawn transformation. The seductress in 'Stolen Waters' has 'A cold cold heart of stone'; Anodos asks of the Alder-maiden 'How can she be so beautiful and have no heart?'

Later in the poem, the lines 'If this be madness, better so/Far better to be mad' echo Duncan Campbell in *The Portent*: "Rather let me be mad still," I said, "if mad I am; and so dream on that I have been blessed"; and later Duncan uses the fire as a focus while 'let{ting} his thoughts roam at will', very much as the narrator of 'Faces in the Fire' does.

The complexity and closeness of aspects of this 'cross-pollination' between MacDonald's work and Dodgson's are undeniably present in *Lilith*. Most obviously, there is the looking-glass as entry-point to another world, but there are other parallels with different pieces of Dodgson's work.

The child-mother, Lona, in *Lilith* is almost an identical being to the child-mother Sylvie in Dodgson's novel *Sylvie and Bruno* (1889). Unlike Lona, Sylvie has only one 'child' – her brother Bruno, but her role as a kind of universal symbol of angelic self-sacrificial caring is entirely the same. Sylvie is a quasi-stepdaughter of the comically evil Tabikat, while Lona is the daughter of the seriously evil Lilith.

Then there is the fluidity of identity in *Lilith* – again a repeated theme in Dodgson's work: the loss of identity and search for meaning. Vane's journey is perhaps an adult version of Alice's own: MacDonald invests the experience with a moral meaning that was anathema to the Dodgson who wrote *Alice*, yet in one draft of *Lilith*, the Raven demands that Vane identify himself in words that almost paraphrase the caterpillar: 'Tell me, then, who you are'.¹

Was MacDonald deliberately adopting symbolic images like the mirror and the child-mother from his friend's internal pantheon?

In his 1995 book *The Literary Products of the Charles Dodgson-George MacDonald Friendship*, John Docherty has suggested that these 'coincidences' are deliberate. Indeed he goes further and proposes that in some sense MacDonald is deliberately homaging or satirising not only Dodgson's work but also his *life*, and indeed that

Dodgson returned the compliment, doing the same for MacDonald in his own books. This is a radical suggestion, but one that has certain things in its favour.

Look for example at the central male character in *Lilith* (the male version of 'Alice' if you like), known by the single name of 'Vane'. He is described by MacDonald as an Oxford man, with a profoundly sceptical, self-centred approach to life. In the character's own words:

"I had myself ... devoted a good deal of my time, though, I confess, after a somewhat desultory fashion, to the physical sciences. It was chiefly the wonder they woke that drew me. I was constantly seeing, and on the outlook to see, strange analogies, not only between the facts of different sciences of the same order, or between physical and metaphysical facts, but between physical hypotheses and suggestions glimmering out of the metaphysical dreams into which I was in the habit of falling. I was at the same time much given to a premature indulgence of the impulse to turn hypothesis into theory..."

This certainly offers what would be a very good description of an aspect of Charles Dodgson's state of mind – particularly as a younger man.

Like Vane in an earlier draft, Dodgson spent some time trying to prove the existence of a fourth dimension mathematically. Like Vane, he was eternally interested in spiritual and metaphysical problems, with a pronounced tendency to try to use scientific methods to deal with non-scientific things (for example his attempts in later life to prove logically the probability of Christ's divinity!).

It is quite tempting, on this alone, to think that MacDonald may have modelled Vane at least in part on his Oxford friend Charles Dodgson, with his curious blend of mysticism and mathematical exactness. Indeed in this context Docherty quotes a cryptic little passage from one of the many drafts of *Lilith*:

In 'Lilith B' {second of MacDonald's six manuscript drafts}, Vane states that the 'one reader for whom' he is writing is 'a college friend... who will himself know that he and no other is intended, for there can be no mistake'.²

Docherty infers the probability that this 'college friend' is MacDonald's allusion to Dodgson, who would indeed know that 'he and no other was intended'.

There is only one problem with Docherty's attempts to relate *Lilith*'s underlying themes and allegorical spiritual journeys to Dodgson's own life: the life-experience of Vane as portrayed by MacDonald just does not offer any real resemblance to the traditional interpretation of Lewis Carroll's existence.

Vane is a man in spiritual crisis. Indeed the whole novel is a prolonged allegory of his journey from helpless selfish confusion into some kind of qualified spiritual rebirth. He is tormented by his own warring passions; he falls in love with the evil seductive demon Lilith and longs for her as a companion, even though she drains him nightly of his life-blood. He is nearly destroyed by his own need of her and his concomitant spiritual blindness, and he has to wander through a wild landscape of moral symbolisms, be-

ing tested and usually found wanting, before finding eventual, if qualified, salvation in the love of the child-woman Lona.

Where are the parallels here to Carroll's alleged 'non-life'?

Docherty tries to find them in the single emotional experience that is traditionally supposed to have entered Dodgson's inner landscape – his supposed passion for Alice Liddell. But his attempts to do so are strained, because there is no actual *prima facie* evidence anywhere to show that Dodgson ever nurtured such a passion. Docherty (like many biographers before and after him) is forced into guessing about what Dodgson thought of the girl, and why she 'must have been' important to him. This is not a good basis for any analysis.

Docherty does his best. He argues that Lona the child-woman is Alice: 'She {Lona/Lilia} was to him {MacDonald} almost as much a living example of ideal asexual femininity as Alice Liddell had been to Dodgson',³ but he doesn't really succeed, because this perforce narrow and immature emotional range cannot encompass the peaks and troughs of Vane's wholly adult experience. Lilit is not to be decanted into Alice, as a quart will never go into a pint glass.

In order to find the connections he is looking for between Vane and Dodgson and Alice Liddell, Docherty is forced into rather crazy quests for cryptic word games:

'An ox is the creature most like a bull, and since Dodgson worked at Oxford it as just possible that MacDonald is alluding {in the city-name Bulika} to Dodgson's image of himself as a Mock Turtle – *i.e.* like a bull, but only a half-creature, and emotionally castrated.'⁴

In analyses like this poor Dodgson is always 'castrated', and no reason is ever given for the *a priori* assumption that he was morally, spiritually or physically less than a man. Sentences like 'Mrs Liddell...apparently felt it necessary that her daughters should be brought up to appear intellectually stupid... Dodgson was moved to help the girls, particularly Alice', and 'One of Dodgson's primary objectives was to rescue Alice Liddell from the treacle-well of her own self-indulgence'⁵ seem to take us right into the crazy heart of Freudian analysis, where inference is built on nothing but inference, for there is not a shred of evidence anywhere that Dodgson ever felt the need to rescue Alice Liddell from anything at all.

None of this inspires much confidence in Docherty's theory, and the temptation is to dismiss it out of hand. But the irony is that, if Docherty had not confined himself to the 'Alice-centred' interpretation of Dodgson's biography, he would have found there truly is an abundance of evidence to support his idea. As I have tried to show elsewhere,⁶ the image of Dodgson as a man focused emotionally and artistically on Alice is almost entirely unsupported by any known evidence. It is a profound, if very popular, falsehood.

Carroll-scholarship is in the grip of a curious and

unique difficulty. The discipline has become absorbed by a largely mythic and baseless image of 'Lewis Carroll', an image so powerful that it has obscured the verifiable realities of the man's life to a truly extraordinary degree.

For so many years the certain images of 'Carroll' have become so repeatedly aired and so widely accepted as fact that it is difficult for any of us to believe that they are anything but true.

Where would our concept of 'Carroll' be without the mental pictures of the shy prim man, avoidant of adult society, regretting the maturing of his 'little friends'? Who is Carroll if not the quiet clergyman who adored Alice Liddell and spent his life regretting her vanishing from his lonely life?

These images are not simply widely held, they are fixed and solid cultural truths – collective beliefs of considerable significance and power; reference points in human experience.

Yet they are false.

They are a blend of fantasy and cosmetic over-simplification. They are myths in the true power of that word: invented cultural beliefs of great emotional and psychological meaning. They are important, they tell us things about ourselves – but they tell us next to nothing about Charles Dodgson.

Recognising this and dealing with it is a large problem for contemporary Carroll scholarship. It needs to be done, and urgently, for at present the myth lies over the facts, obscuring and distorting them, making rational analysis very difficult if not impossible. We need to go back to the sources, and study them without preconceptual images of 'Carroll' in our minds.

Beneath this ice-film of our own imaginal creation, Dodgson's reality flows fast and free like a winter river. If we punch through we can find him, almost touch him. He speaks in his letters, his diaries, his fiction, and the story he tells of his own life is often far from our own familiar 'truths'. We just have to learn to listen to him and tune out the noise of our own belief. Until we do this, Carroll scholarship will remain mired in the mistakes of its own past, condemned, as someone said, to repeat them.

When we see how the power of this mythic 'biography' has impacted upon the work of one scholar, we can recognise the strength of its continued distorting effect on the discipline as a whole. It's an effect that should never be underestimated.

John Docherty has had the great insight and imagination to see the wide-ranging connections between MacDonald and Dodgson. He has recognised the fascinating possibility that *Lilith* may be on one level a kind of biographical essay on Dodgson's spiritual experience. Yet the gap between the tormented 'Vane' of MacDonald's novel and the image of quiet Mr Dodgson has proved a major problem for him and he has undermined some of his best work in an attempt to 'interpret' *Lilith* as an allegory on the mythic relationship between Dodgson and Alice Liddell. He is so constrained by this that he is even forced to omit large

chunks of *Lilith's* most obvious symbolism – for example the sexual temptation promised by the title character – as being simply too inconsistent with the Dodgson-Alice story.

Yet ironically he had no need to bother with this. For in reality, beneath the ice-film, Dodgson's life did not revolve merely around Alice Liddell as *Dreamchild* and so much biography claims, and there is no requirement to find all the solutions to his emotional experience in her. In reality she was a mere part of a rich, curious and secretive existence, which has yet to be even sketchily mapped out.

The *real* Dodgson did indeed go through just such a profound spiritual nightmare as that reflected in *Lilith*, and at the very time that MacDonald first entered his life. He even expressed it in almost identical language to that employed in *Lilith*. And if Docherty had been able to know about this and incorporate it into his book it would have increased the power of his argument by a considerable margin, yet at the time that he was writing, it was still buried in the snows.

Throughout the 1860s, as I have shown in my book, Dodgson was in spiritual turmoil; living a life which he frequently described as both Godless and selfish. His faith was 'failing'. He tried to pray but seemed to 'beat the air'. When he preached from the pulpit he felt he was a hypocrite, 'preaching to others, myself a castaway'.⁷ In other words, as Morton Cohen had the insight to recognise, 'the man is in trouble'.⁸

His taking of the diaconate in 1861, and rejection of the priesthood the following year, were both done in a state of such profound confusion and apparent self-loathing as well as self-deception that if the honest, rigorous and devout George MacDonald ever knew about it he would surely have feared for the man's soul and wondered where on earth his life was taking him. And after this, between 1862 and 1868, while he was closest to the MacDonald family, Dodgson first sank further into sporadic, near-suicidal misery and self-loathing, and then began a definite, but rather odd and qualified spiritual recovery.

At this point we should look at two of Dodgson's love poems, 'Stolen Waters' (1862) and 'The Valley of the Shadow of Death' (1868).

These two poems tell a virtually identical story of a man who is lured from righteousness and seduced into sinful 'pleasure'.

'Sweet is the stolen draught' she said:
 'Hath sweetness stint or measure?
 Pleasant the secret hoard of bread:
 What bars us from our pleasure?'
 'Yes, take we pleasure while we may,
 I heard myself replying.
 In the red sunset far away
 My happier life was dying.

('Waters')

The spells that bound me with a chain
 Sin's stern behest to do,
 Till Pleasure's self, invoked in vain,
 A heavy burden grew...

('Valley')

He becomes almost suicidal –
 Yea, when one's heart is laid asleep,
 What better than to die?

('Waters')

I heard a whisper cold and clear
 'That is the gate of Death.'

...
 'Oh well', it said 'beneath yon pool,
 In some still cavern deep,
 The fevered brain might slumber cool,
 The eyes forget to weep.'

('Valley')

– and then finds salvation through a rediscovery of childhood innocence.

I heard a clear voice singing:

...
*Be as a child –
 So shalt thou sing for very joy of breath*

('Waters')

Soft fell the dying ray
 On two fair children, side by side,
 That rested from their play.

...
 Blest day! Then first I heard the voice
 That since has oft beguiled
 These eyes from tears, and bid rejoice
 This heart with anguish wild.

('Valley')

The second poem, 'Valley', takes the story slightly further than the first. In this the man falls in love with and later marries his innocent rescuer, a child-woman who bears him a son and then dies.

Though parted from my aching sight
 Like homeward-speeding dove,
 She passed into the perfect light
 That floods the world above;
 Yet our twin spirits, well I know –
 Though one abide in pain below –
 Love, as in summers long ago,
 And evermore shall love.

The repetition shows us how haunted Dodgson was during this period of spiritual and emotional turmoil. It is indeed Dodgson 'revealing his inner self, his biting fears'.⁹

And what fears? Temptation in the form of a powerful seductress, sinful copulation, despair and confusion and a long exile in a landscape of spiritual despair, until eventual salvation is brought to him by the love of a child-woman.

We have encountered all this before haven't we? Dodgson's poetry and his private confessions of sin take us on an almost identical moral journey to that MacDonald detailed in *Lilith*.

Dodgson and Vane are indeed spiritual brothers, and the possibility that MacDonald quite deliberately modelled the second upon the first becomes more than plausible. The buried reality of Dodgson's life offers support

for an hypothesis that viewing from the traditional perspective would render almost laughable.

Surely there is a lesson here for all of us.

The distorting effect of this great mythic 'Carroll' presence cannot be overestimated. It has dominated the scholarship for so long that it is has become all but unconquerable. Almost every word of biography and literary criticism ever written has been conceived and born in the shadow of that image. Deconstructing this great looming mass of ink and certitude is no small challenge. New research is beginning to try, but it's a large job, and there is resistance to it on all sides.

I hope this mood will pass, and that fine scholars like Docherty, Cohen, and others will see the discovery of this 'new Dodgson' as an opportunity – maybe also as a kind of duty.

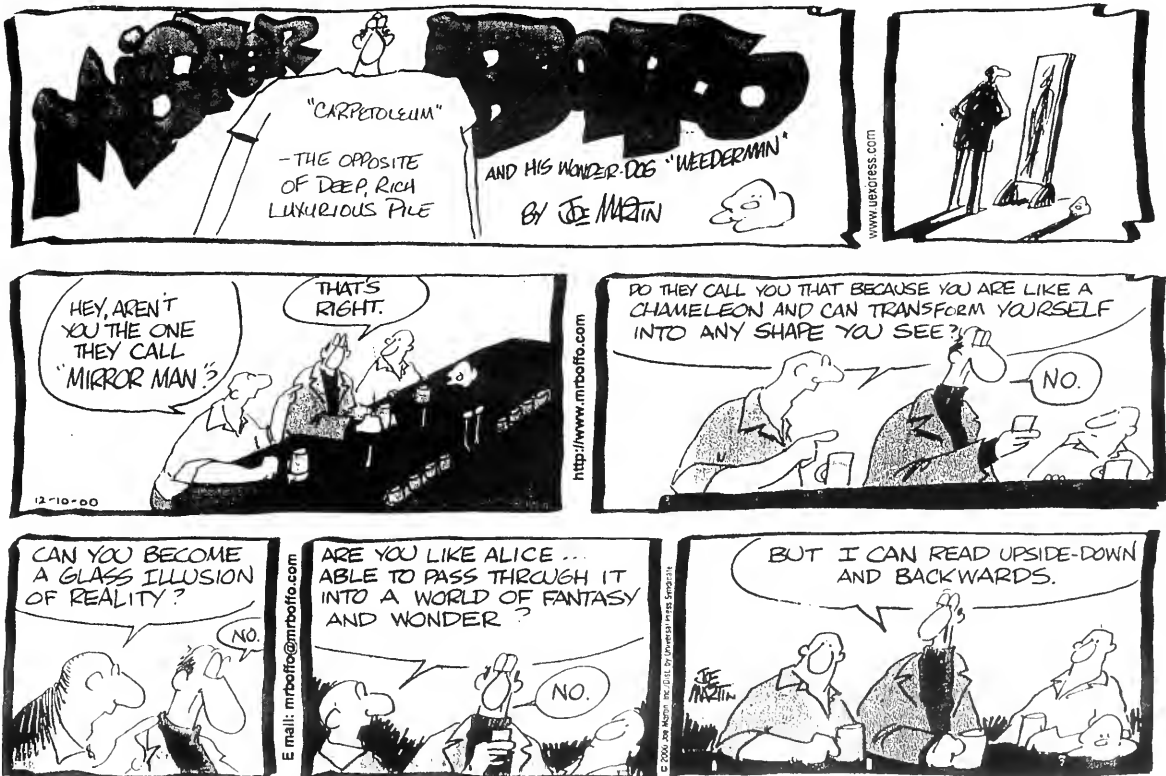
The man didn't ask to be 'misremembered'. He may have preferred not to be remembered at all. He may have hated to be 'known indiscriminately by what he could not know'. So, if we have to publish his diaries and scour his letters, we have a huge responsibility to try and tell as much of the truth as possible. He's served his time as an icon for other people's aspirations. Let's allow him to begin speaking for himself.

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Notes

1. MacDonald 1895: ch. 2
2. Docherty 1995: 355
3. *ibid.*: 361
4. *ibid.*: 381
5. *ibid.*: 85, 116
6. Leach 1999
7. Wakeling (ed.) 1993-9, IV: 108, V: 152, 165
8. Cohen 1995: 225
9. Cohen 1995: 224



On Possible Bases of a Number System

Francine F. Abeles

In a recent article in *The Carrollian*, no.5 (Spring 2000), "Alice's Mathematics", an interpretation of a passage in 'The Pool of Tears' chapter involves the possible bases of a number system. To explain the passage 'Let me see: four times five is twelve, and four time six is thirteen, and four time seven is – oh dear! I shall never get to twenty at that rate!', Kenneth S. Salins invokes both positive and negative numbers and zero as bases of a number system. But, contrary to the White Queen's belief in impossible things, as many as six before breakfast, we must register disbelief at the idea of a continuum of number bases.¹

In a positional number system like our decimal system (L. *decem*, Gk *δεκα*: ten), any positive integer, e.g. 254, can be written in this way:

$$254 = 2 \times 10^2 + 5 \times 10^1 + 4 \times 10^0$$

What is important is that the *meaning* of the digits 2, 5, and 4 depends on their *position* in the hundreds, tens, and units places. Using this notation, we can represent any nonnegative integer z uniquely in the form:

$$z = a_n 10^n + a_{n-1} 10^{n-1} + \dots + a_1 10 + a_0, \text{ and use the digits } a_n a_{n-1} \dots a_1 a_0 \text{ as the symbol for } z. \quad (1)$$

We can extend these ideas to any base *which is a positive integer greater than one* by stating the following theorem whose content was known to Blaise Pascal (1623-1662):

Each nonnegative integer z can be written uniquely in the form

$$z = a_n k^n + a_{n-1} k^{n-1} + \dots + a_1 k + a_0 \text{ where } a_i \text{ and } k \text{ are integers, } k \geq 2, 0 \leq a_i < k \text{ and } a_n \neq 0. \quad (2)$$

The advantage that positional number systems have over others can be appreciated when we do arithmetical calculations like adding $23 + 42 = 65$. In the Roman (nonpositional) system, for example, we would have to write:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{XXIII} + \text{XLII} &= \text{XXIII} + \text{XXXXII} \\ &= \text{XXXXXXXXIII} \\ &= \text{LXV} \end{aligned}$$

The proof of the theorem (2) depends on the standard division algorithm which says that if one divides a (positive) integer t by the nonzero integer b (the base), there exist unique integers q (the quotient) and r (the remainder) where r is nonnegative and less than the absolute value of b such that $t = bq + r$.

Let's apply the division algorithm to the integer 113 in our decimal system. We write it as $113 = 10 \times 11 + 3$. When we use -10 as the base we write $113 = -10 \times -11 + 3$. So we have two different representations of 113, but each integer must have a *unique* representation as in (1), above. The theorem (2) ensures this unique integer representation for any number base 2, or greater. The theorem also excludes 0 and 1 as possible bases, and we see that neither 0 nor 1

make any sense when substituted appropriately into (1).

Of course, we could state the theorem alternatively, for any base -2 or smaller, but that would not change the result, *i.e.* the only way to have a unique representation for each positive integer is to permit either positive integers or negative integers, but not both, to be possible bases for a number system.

The importance of the uniqueness requirement becomes apparent when we consider how an integer is represented in a computer. Since a computer can only "read" strings of 0s and 1s, the underlying number system of a machine is of base 2. When we represent decimal integers in base 2, we must be certain that each corresponds to exactly one base 2 integer, and conversely.²

1. For more information on the patterns Dodgson explored in this passage, the reader may find my article "Multiplication in Changing Bases: A Note on Lewis Carroll" in *Historia Mathematica* 3 (1976), 183-4, of interest.

2. I am grateful to Stan Lipson for illuminating conversations on topics discussed in this paper, and to Edward Wakeling for correcting an arithmetic error in an earlier version.



Answer to Quiz, p.7

C.H.K. Van Rooten, in his book *Mots d'Heures: Gousses, Rames* (pronounced "Mother Goose Rhymes", Grossman, 1967) takes "Anguish Languish" on step further by creating nonsensical French verses which, when read aloud, imitate the sound of English nursery rhymes, in this case "Humpty Dumpty".

[*Mère L'Oie we roll along...*]



Carrollian Notes

If I Hadden Seen It, I Wooden Believe It

John Hadden is the talented creator of a fantastic series of "Portraits in Wood" or "biography boxes". After deeply studying his subject, he sculpts the individual symbolic pieces out of fine woods and then carves, sands, and/or paints them. He may then add wire or Fimo for special effects (such as the surprise hidden behind Dodgson's camera). Everything from the box to the letters to the objects is *made by hand*, from scratch! His superb and unique portrait box of Lewis Carroll's life and works (measuring $32\frac{3}{4}'' \times 35\frac{1}{2}'' \times 3''$) is available for \$7,500. A color postcard is enclosed with this issue. Write to him at 24A Longfellow Avenue, Brunswick ME 04011 or call 1.207.725.4379.

Egg-spertise

An essay on Longfellow appeared in the "Bookend" section of *The New York Times Book Review*, 22 October. Poet/critic J.D. McClatchy wrote: "And in the wake of 'The Song of Hiawatha', in 1855 – well, the nation is still cluttered with motels and steamboats, summer camps and high schools that bear the name. It was a poem imitated in French by Baudelaire and translated into Latin by Cardinal Newman's brother. As 'Hiawatha's Photographing,' it was even quickly parodied by Edward Lear. Parody is the last form praise takes; Lear thought Longfellow 'the greatest living master of language', but his contemporary sendup ('From his shoulder Hiawatha / Took the camera of rosewood, / Made of sliding, folding rosewood; / Neatly put it all together') takes primitivism into the drawing room with hilarious consequences."

[Yes, and I suppose Lewis Carroll wrote "The Dong with the Luminous Nose".]

[Sic], [Sic], [Sic]

[The following is a direct quotation from Klimpereï's website <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/lapin-gris/alice>. Their CD is available for 100FF.]

Klimpereï, a french duo from Lyon, has been playing for a long time now, a kind of music for children, warm and unbalanced, fragile and funny: their sincerity and simplicity of which can touch or get on your nerves, it depends... A bit like Eric Rohmer's movies. Herein, they come back with a special opus from their repertoire: for the first time, Klimpereï tried to follow a line, tacking about literary references and surrealistic details. Miniatures (more than 40 numbers for 70 min of music) of carved music, ambient

and even pop. A bit like Pascal Comelade, and all these self-taught artists with serene thoughts. A work recognized by their peers since the artwork is made by Alifie Bengé who is used to illustrate the CDs of Robert Wyatt. Really dreamt! Alice is to the wonders what the penicillium is to the Roquefort. Wonders which punctuate life with amazements, little fears, obsessions or absurdities. Not a marshmallow world where Manicheism rules social life. In this wonderland, queens are puzzling (sometimes disgusting), animals talk about uninteresting things (in the grown-up sense), and vicious circles settle, without modifying the rythm of life though. Everything seems natural, because these surrealistic nonsenses are not very different from ours. Heads?, we cut some everyday in a way. And this is where Lewis Carroll did a mistake: the story of Alice is everything but a dream. This is what Klimpereï tries to make us live once more through a soft drive inside the text of Lewis Carroll and in the Alice's adventures. We are not so far from breaking through the mirror to madness. Klimpereï's deceptively simple tunes and musical arrangements are the perfect reflection of false stupidities of the book. Comic half-obsolete half-flicted songs, melancholic atmospheres and reeks of bombast (beurk...). Klimpereï suggests a true concept siidi, remaining humble and sincere.

O dear, O dear

Since all is well with the Jabberwock (KL 64, p.19), now it's the White Rabbit's turn to be missing. Thieves using heavy equipment lifted the nearly 6-foot tall, 650-pound bronze statue, valued at more than \$75,000, from its foundations outside Fiddler's Green Amphitheater (Englewood, CO) last month. The White Rabbit was sculpted by Harry Marinsky, 81, and was the first of eight sculptures built around *AW* themes [KL 52, p.11]. Five other bronze statues are on display there; others are at the Museum of Outdoor Art (www.artstozoo.org/moa/moagard.htm).



"I'm sorry, but all the King's men aren't approved providers for your HMO."

OF BOOKS & THINGS



We're Off to See the Gryphon

An article, "Oz is Us: Celebrating the Wizard's Centennial", by John Updike in *The New Yorker*, September 25, 2000, discusses Martin Gardner's "reluctance to perform an annotation to the first Oz book, as he did for Carroll". Updike comments "It is not hard to imagine why Gardner ducked the original assignment. The two *Alice* books are more literate, intricate, and modernist than Baum's *Wonderful Wizard*, and Lewis Carroll's mind, laden with mathematical lore, chess moves, semantic puzzles, and the riddles of Victorian religion, was more susceptible to explication."

Oz and Wonderland, like most siblings, have enjoyed an uneasy relationship over the years. They are often mingled or confused (the Muppets' adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* ended with the characters singing "We're off to see the Wizard"; the comic book series "The Oz-Wonderland Wars"; the recent *Jimmy Zangwow's Out-of-this-world Moon Pie Adventure*, and so many others), as they both involve a young girl traveling to odd and foreign lands. However, Baum's (quite derivative) land is a sort of *ur*-Kansas, with the denizens being small twists on her family, friends, and pets, living a life of stringent morality. Carroll's whimsy, amorality and irreality is of a far more original and brilliant order. L. Frank Baum, the "Royal Historian of Oz", wrote fourteen books; there are three or four times that number in the "canon" today, written by other hands.

Martin Gardner has achieved quite a coup in at last reconciling these sister lands. His delectable *Visitors from Oz* (St. Martin's Press, 1998; 0-312-19353-X) is a fine, fun, adventuresome tale for "children of all ages". Built around a frame story of a movie producer (whose last success was "Alice in Carrolland") importing Dorothy back from Oz to New York for publicity purposes (he managed to reach Glinda through the Internet!), the tale unfolds both in Oz and in the "real" world. Dorothy and her two companions meet characters from Greek myth, Wonderland and Looking-Glass-land, and also genuine personages like Stephen Jay Gould. An added layer to the palimpsest for Gardner's many fans is to trace how many of his own passions can be found therein: mathematical games and puzzles; puns; chess and cards; non-Euclidean geometry; skepticism and debunking; Sherlock Holmes; multiple levels, self-referentiality and frame-breaking (the Mad Hatter refers to "*The Annotated Alice* by the same man who's writing this Oz book") and so on. Well worth a read!

Soto Voce

Reflections on Lewis Carroll by "Various Hands", a fascinating chapbook of critical essays edited by Fernando J. Soto assisted by Dayna McCausland, was published recently by the L.C.S. Canada, and is free to all its members. Dues are only CD\$15 in Canada; US\$13 in the States; and US\$15 for international members. You *can* buy the book alone for US\$12/US\$13(international) plus postage, but then you'd miss out on the joys of "White Rabbit Tales", their worthy newsletter. Write to Dayna: sheerluck@sympatico.ca, or Box 321, Erin ON, N0B 1T0 Canada.

The volume contains "Carroll's Easter Bunny" by John Docherty, "Lewis Carroll and the Law" by Peter Wesley-Smith, "Alice's Adventures Away from Home: The Misunderstanding of Life, Language and Culture in Wonderland and the Looking-Glass World" by Monica McCarter, "Framing the Dream Vision in the *Alice* Books" by Chris Pezzarello, "Two Important Logical Insights by Lewis Carroll" by George Englebretsen, "Lewis Carroll's Legal Snark and Guilty (*sic*) Mind: 'The Barrister's Dream' Interpreted" by Fernando J. Soto, and "Why Alice Accepts Her Humble Position in the *Looking-Glass* Chess Game" by Glen Downey.

Lithe and Slimy

Editions of *TTLG* generally range from the sublime to the mundane, but an entirely new category of "fescinnine pudendous sludge" must be created for the bottom-feeding, dolorific effrontery of the "Creation Classic Portable" paperback edition by Creation Books of the U.K. (1-84068-021-0, \$11, £7). The caprylic perversities of the babblative introducer, a fastuous and egolatrous flâneur called Jeremy Reed, spill over into his filipendulous and discrutiating foreword, seeing Dodgson only in cacodoxial terms of wholly imagined sexual obsessions, and the work itself as "a covert paean to hallucinogenic drug abuse" with Reed's only "scholarship" being mucid references to the carminative lyrics of brummagem English pop groups of the 1960s and beyond. Ah, but the insolence doesn't stop there. Trevor Brown's maltalented and anapologetical exspuitation on the cover portrays a tutmouthed, concupiscible Alice with legs akimbo and unsuitable underwear on exhibitionistic display. A stegnotic would be in order. Shame on them.

From Our Far-flung



Correspondents

Books

Broadview Literary Texts have produced a superb and inexpensive scholarly edition of *AW*, under the editorship of Richard Kelly. The series “presents the text together with a variety of documents from the period, giving readers a rich sense of the world from which [they] emerged.” It includes an introductory essay, a chronology, the full texts of *AW*, *Alice’s Adventures under Ground*, *The Nursery Alice*, and “*Alice on the Stage*”, excerpts from *Symbolic Logic* and his diaries and letters, the difficult-to-find “*Alice’s Recollection of Carrollian Days*” from *The Cornhill Magazine* (1932), contemporary reviews, photographs, and excerpts from other children’s literature of the time. www.broadviewpress.com; 1-55111-223-X, \$10 in paperback.

The Artful Dodger: Images and Reflections reflects on the career of author/illustrator Nick Bantock, with insights into his editions of “*Jabberwocky*” and “*The Walrus and the Carpenter*”. \$40 hardcover from Chronicle Books (0811827526) or as a 2001 Engagement Calendar (0811827003) for \$15.

Sci-fi “*Hugo*” *Nominees, 1999*, ed. Rhias K. Hall, Alexandria Digital Literature, \$25 (0-7420-0625-5) includes “*Hunting the Snark*” by Mike Resnick.

Taking my Cue from the Walrus by Bonnie Gartstone, Small Poetry Press, Box 5342, Concord CA 94524.

Jimmy Zangwou’s Out-of-this-world Moon Pie Adventure by Tony DiTerlizzi (grades 1-4) mixes Alician and Ozian characters. From Simon & Schuster 0689822154. \$16.

Alice in a Miniaturebook (2½ inches square), a radically abridged *AW/TTLG* (in English) illustrated by Nakajima Youichi and Okamoto Naoko from Annie’s Coloring Studio in Japan, is for sale by the L.C.S. (U.K.). The book

costs £12 or \$20, post free. They can accept cheques made payable to ‘The Lewis Carroll Society’, drawn in sterling on a U.K. bank, or checks in U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank. Alan White, 69 Cromwell Road, Hertford, Herts., SG13 7DP, U.K. 01992 584530 or alanwhite@tesco.net.

Alice’s Pop-Up Wonderland (Macmillan Children’s Books, £15). “A pop-up carousel features the six scenes with more than 30 press-out figures. There are lots of surprises behind the flaps and pull-out tabs, plus a mini-board game of the Queen’s croquet match.” A review in the *Daily Mail* (London) says “...The book announces itself as by Nick Denchfield and Alex Vining, though by inspecting the back cover under a powerful microscope it is also possible to pick out the names of Lewis Carroll and John Tenniel. Perhaps they would prefer it so. The illustrations are all based on Tenniel (as the text is on Carroll) though in a rather fuzzy and anaemic fashion.” 0333901134.

“*Charming Classics*” (HarperCollins) *AW* with a small “gold” White Rabbit charm on a chain, \$6. 0-694-0145400.

Signet Classic’s *AW/TTLG* with an introduction by Martin Gardner, has been reissued as a mass market paperback (\$4, 0451527747).

A poster enclosed with the book reveals that Jassen Ghiuselev’s absolutely superb set of sepia monochrome illustrations to *Alice im Wunderland* (retold by Barbara Frischmuth), are in fact pieces of a larger work, a true artistic *tour-de-force*. Aufbau-Verlag, Berlin, 2000; 3-351-04003-2.

Donald Knuth has published “*Biblical Ladders*” in *The Mathemagician and Pied Puzzler: A Collection in Tribute to Martin Gardner*, edited by E. Berlekamp and T. Rodgers, A.K. Peters,

1999. “*Biblical Ladders*” is a version of Carroll’s “*Doublets*”; Knuth is the Stanford premier computer scientist; Berlekamp is the Berkeley mathematician famous for his books on Go. \$34; 156881075X.

Lynne Truss’ novel *Tennyson’s Gift* (1996: Penguin, U.K., 0241135214), about the “*Freshwater Circle*” (Tennyson and Julia Margaret Cameron had nearby cottages on the Isle of Wight) and their invited luminaries such as G. F. Watts, his wife Ellen Terry, and CLD, has been translated into French by Hugues Lebailly.

The naming of *The White Queen’s Dictionary of One-Letter Words* (with over seven hundred entries!) was inspired by her majesty’s “*And I’ll tell you a secret — I can read words of one letter! Isn’t that grand!?*” in *TTLG*. You can see a sample and order it from <http://blueray.com/dictionary/oneletter>; pivotal@pobox.com; \$11+p&h from Pivotal, Inc., 307 Dumont Drive, Hillsborough, NC 27278.

Alice Falling, the first novel by William Wall, W. W. Norton & Company, is a loathsome exercise about an affluent group of friends whose boredom and despair combust into tragedy. Although inspired by the first scene of the *Alice* books, it is a thoroughly depressing modernist reading.

Two of Totem Books’ “*Introducing*” series use Alician imagery on their covers: *Introducing the Universe* and *Introducing Mathematics*.

Performances Noted

Alice in Bed, a play written by Susan Sontag in 1992, had its New York premier in *November*. “The play is a free fantasy based on some elementary givens of this life, braided with imagery from *AW*— the most famous Alice of the 19th century — to evoke completely contemporary themes.” The title character is Alice James, the brilliant, depressed sister of the novelist Henry

James and the psychologist William James, and the Wonderland references include a tea party.

Alice in Modernland by Kirsten Nash at the Sledgehammer Theatre, San Diego CA, October/November. In this adult fairy tale, Alice tries to break into the music industry.

TTLG adapted by Eric Schmiedl, Cleveland (OH) Play House children's theater in late November.

Awards

Santoro Graphics in London has been honored at the Greetings Card Association International Card of the year contest for the third year running. Their *AW* "depth card" was awarded this year's International Louie Award for its entry in the blank/non-occasion category. [*Does an un-birthday qualify for a "non-occasion"?*] The awards, begun in 1988, were named after the father of American greetings, Louis Prang. "Depth Cards are just one of a range of greetings which include swing cards, bang on the door and flux deluxe."

The annual "Diagram Group Prize" nominations by readers of *The Bookseller* magazine for the oddest title of the year include *Psoriasis at Your Fingertips*, *Woodcarving with a Chainsaw, Whose Bottom? A Lift-the-Flap Book*, and *Did Lewis Carroll Visit Llandudno?*

Places and Events

"Alice's Wicked Wonderland Tour" publicized the release of the horrific and violent video game by Electronic Arts (see *KL* 64, p. 22 or www.alice.ea.com) at the Sound Factory dance club in San Francisco on 26 October (and other venues) with a multimedia "rave" featuring Goth game designer American McGee, a circus troupe, "house music", *AW* fractal videos, and so forth. Natalie Portman, 19, (Queen Amidala in "Star Wars") has been lined up to play Alice in the just-announced film version, to be directed by "Scream" and "Nightmare on Elm Street" director Wes Craven. Eeek!

The Mad Hatter's 14th Annual Tea Party will take place February 23-25, 2001 in Portland, Maine. It's all about

tattooing. See <http://members.aol.com/RobFAM10/Madhatters.html>.

The Cheshire Cat Brewpub, housed in a restored Victorian mansion built in 1891, opened its doors at 7803 Ralston Road in Denver CO.

Exhibitions

A life-size painted fiberglass cow depicting scenes from *AW* by mural artist Debbi Unger is part of a four-month exhibition called "WACOWS", benefiting The Art Center in Waco, TX. The WACOWS were publicly auctioned December 9th through live and Internet venues. www.wacows.com/wonderauc.html.

Beverly Wallace's series of collo-graphic prints of "Jabberwocky" was the subject of a one person exhibit at the Hutchiuns Gallery of Long Island University.

"The Art of Grace Slick" at Artrock in San Francisco Nov/Dec featured acrylic paintings (an *acid*-based medium), including an *AW* with Timothy Leary as the Hatter, Lennon / McCartney as the Bros. Tweedle and so on.

Alice's Shop in Oxford is currently working to establish an *AW* Gallery and Tearoom two doors from the shop, which will be on the ground floor of a building on the corner of Rose Place and St. Aldates, directly opposite the gates of the Christ Church memorial gardens. They have put out a call for artists and craftspeople to submit work based on an Alician theme for exhibition and sale through the Alice's Shop Gallery. They are interested in all media, including paintings, prints, ceramics, pottery, sculpture, jewelry and so forth. Contact Luke Gander. alice@sheepshop.com; www.sheepshop.com; 83 St. Aldates, Oxford, OX1 1RA, U.K.; 01865 723793; ~726752 fax.

Academia

Dr. Sandor Burstein inaugurated a series of "Peer Presentations" by speaking on "Down the Rabbit Hole with Alice: Into the Mind and Books of Lewis Carroll" at the Fromm Institute in San Francisco, 25 September.

Professor Francine Abeles of Kean University, speaking on "LC's 'Game' of Voting", considers CLD "a voting theorist second only to the great eighteenth century social scientist and philosopher, the Marquis de Condorcet". November 9 at Adelphi University in Garden City NY.

The doctoral dissertation of Martina Paatela-Nieminen, Lic.Art, entitled "On the Threshold of Intercultural *Alices*: Intertextual research on the illustrations of the English *Alice in Wonderland* and the German *Alice im Wunderland* with respect to inter-media research in the field of art education", has been published by the University of Art and Design Helsinki as a CD-ROM. Contact mpaatela@uiah.fi. Orders: books@uiah.fi. +358 9 7563 0319; www.uiah.fi.

Auctions

Illustration House (New York), 4 November, had the original art by Frank Adams of "Alice and the Rabbit" from *Stories Old and New*.

With nearly 2000 items by and about Lewis Carroll, the Hilda Bohem collection is now being sold as a unit through Needham Book Finders for \$150,000. Contact Stanley Kurman, Needham Book Finders, PO Box 3067, Santa Monica, CA 90408; 310.395.0538; kurmania@aol.com.

Movies and Television

The 1999 British live-action television film "Alice Through the Looking-Glass", directed by John Henderson and featuring Ian Holm, Ian Richardson, and Siân Phillips was broadcast several times on HBO-Family throughout October. The movie includes the "Wasp in a Wig" chapter.

According to an interview in *Parade*, 22 October, actress Lucy Liu ("Ally McBeal", "Charlie's Angels") got her start in acting in an *AW* production at University of Michigan, where she had the title role.

In "The Sight", a 1999 serial-murder mystery movie made for television and known in the U.K. as "Shadows", a young American architect is sent to Britain to refurbish an old London hotel and finds himself exposed to a

chain of unusual events, strange visions, ghosts and frightening dreams. CLD and a girl named Alice both make appearances.

Online

An admirable website, thoughtfully and engagingly designed and full of fascinating specialties including perhaps the most comprehensive overview yet of the various films and television adaptations, is the brainchild of Larry Hall. Other 'goodies' include a feature on the Alice shop in Oxford, a Dodgson-inspired 'jukebox', a tour around the 'Curious Labyrinth' attraction in Disneyland Paris, and an *AW* adaptation which combines the Tenniel illustrations with a real-life Alice (his five-year-old grand-daughter Annie Louise). www.alice-in-wonderland.fsnet.co.uk.

Ottawa based BetweenCovers.com debuted its new name, KidZlibrary.com, its new look and first free content: the complete *AW* (four hours long), read by Peter Cochrane, illustrated by Ryan MacKeen, and making use of the RealPlayer engine.

Lenny de Rooy, a 21-year old Dutch woman, has established a welcoming website for students at www.student.kun.nl/l.derooy/.

The L.C.S. (U.K.) website now contains the full table of contents and keyword search for all issues of *Jabberwocky* (its journal before it became *The Carrollian*). <http://aznet.co.uk/lcs/jabberwocky>.

Salon.com's "Virtual Reading Group" (<http://tabletalk.salon.com>) discussed *AW* and *TTLG* in September, 2000.

Programmers are a playful lot, and have been known to insert hidden goodies known as "Easter Eggs" in the operating systems and applications they have engineered. Clicking the right combination of keys can produce hidden video games in Microsoft Word, and so on. One of them is called the "Mad Hatter screensaver", which changes the popular "pipes" screensaver (for Windows and NT), periodically making one of the joints into a teapot. See www.cnet.com and type in "Easter Eggs" in the Search window.

A list of Carroll's appearances on postage stamps, as well as many fascinating recreational math and chess problems and puzzles are found at Mario Velucci's website <http://anduin.eldar.org/~problemi/brain.html>.

Cecil Adams' ("The Straight Dope") article refuting Richard Wallace contention that Dodgson was Jack the Ripper can be found at <http://www.straightdope.com/classics/a970307a.html>.

An excellent tribute page to actress Kathryn Beaumont, the voice of Disney's Alice, at <http://www.donbrockway.com/kb.htm>.

Some basic information about Dennis Potter's 1965 ur-*Dreamchild* teleplay *Alice* can be found at www.ucrsj.ac.uk/potter/alice.htm.

A list of "Musical Compositions Inspired by Lewis Carroll" can be found at Markus Lång's site www.helsinki.fi/~mlang/carroll-music.html, which points also to his Carroll biography in Finnish.

Photographs of absolutely marvelous sand sculptures at <http://www.sandscapes.com/archive/FairyTales/FairyTales.htm>.

The Tony Sarg Mad Hatter marionette (c. 1920) is visible at www.puppet.org/strange.html#MadHatter. Some images of Bill Baird's Alice puppets (1974) at <http://home.att.net/~mbaroto/balice.htm>.

An essay by amateur astronomer Hans Havermann showing the night sky on Alice Liddell's birthday believes that the Cheshire Cat may have been a metaphor for the moon. <http://members.home.net/hahaj/cheshire.html>.

Articles

"In the Midst of his Laughter and Glee": Nonsense and Nothingness in Lewis Carroll" by Elizabeth Sewell in *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. LXXXII, No. 3-4, Fall/Winter '99 (actually, it was published in November '00). (*Soundings* is the new title of *The Christian Scholar* and not the boating magazine.) Reprints of this superb and important study by the premier nonsense scholar are available from SVHE, 633 SW Montgomery St.,

Portland OR 97201; 503.721.6520; ~3 fax; svhe@unidial.com.

The British *Gentleman's Quarterly* for December 2000 contains "Malice in Wonderland", twelve pages of photographs of celebrities dressed in Alician costumes having a tea party and generally misbehaving. Supermodel Kate Moss is the White Rabbit, Jade Jagger the Cheshire Cat, Elizabeth Jagger is Alice, Anita Pallenberg is the Queen of Hearts, and so on. The pictures were taken by "society fixture and photographer" Dan Macmillan.

"Language Heads Down the Rabbit Hole" by John Schwartz in the *New York Times* "Week in Review" section, 20 December, refers to Tom Stoppard, Carroll, and so on.

"Lewis Carroll - mathematician and teacher of children" by Canon D. B. Eperson in *The Mathematical Gazette* Volume 84 Number 499, March 2000. It can be downloaded in .pdf format at <http://www.m-a.org.uk/eb/mg/mg084a.htm>.

The October edition of *PC Gaming World* was accompanied by a free CD-ROM containing a four minute preview of *American McGee's Alice*. A review of the pathologically violent game can be seen in "Down a Rabbit Hole to a Dark Wonderland" by Charles Herold, *The New York Times*, 21 December.

Things

The first "Limited Edition Sericel" of "Disney Leading Ladies" contains photographs and signatures of the actresses who were the voices of Cinderella (Eileen Woods), Sleeping Beauty (Mary Costa), and Alice (Kathryn Beaumont) along with drawings of the characters. Edition of 1,500. \$475.

Actress Sally Fields reads an abridgment of *AW* on audio cassette (0671581120) or CD (0743506413). From Simon & Schuster. \$20.

Nintendo's "Game Boy Color" game based on Disney's *AW* was released in September.

Herbert Bauman's 1925 composition of *AW* ballet music has been recorded by the Radio-Philharmonie Hannover des NDR and released on CD by Thoro-

fon (CTH 2360), with a booklet in English and French.

Gryne, a band from Reno, has recorded "Pictures & Conversations" on the In Stead Music label; described as a "musical accompaniment" to a retelling of *AW*. In MP3 DAT format from <http://artists.mp3s.com/artists/165/gryne.html> or conventional CD format from P.O. Box 60254, Reno NV 89506.

A new line of hand-painted resin tree ornaments based on the "*AW* Ten Pins" figures; \$15 each from the Metropolitan Museum of Art store; 800.468.7386; www.metmuseum.org/store.

An *AW* Magic Mug – the full Tenniel illo, not the common abbreviated headshot – \$13 from The Unemployed Philosophers Guild, 61 Pearl St Suite 508, Brooklyn, NY 11201; 718.243.9492 or 800.255.8371; hegelian@aol.com; www.philosophersguild.com. They also carry "Freudian slippers" and a host of other wackiness.

According to the instruction manual for The Dragon NaturallySpeaking Mobile Organizer (a voice-to-text program), to separate items one should either stop recording between them or say the word "Jabberwocky".

Quotable magnets with the Queen's dialog about impossible things, from quotable cards, 611 Broadway Suite 810, New York NY 10012, 212.420.7552 or ~8 fax.

Cement Alice garden statue (25½" high) from Gumps, \$100; 800.284.8677; www.gumps.com.

Muriel Ratcliffe at the Alice in Wonderland Centre in Llandudno has available an interactive *AW* CD-ROM by Joriko. "It is a full feature length CD (Windows compatible) which includes 12 interactive puzzles and games, beautifully presented in wonderful colour graphics, and narrated by Simon Callow. It retails at £25 or us\$40 (10% discount for LCS and LCSNA members). www.wonderland.co.uk; 3 &

4 Trinity Square, Llandudno, North Wales, UK. [Or directly from www.joriko.com]

Jan Svankmajer's *Alice* is now on DVD. Unfortunately, it does not include his short 1971 film of "Jabberwocky" (*Zvahlav aneb Saticky Slameného Huberta*).

The current run of the DC Comics comic book *The Flash* has a continuing story where he goes into a looking-glass universe. It's not Alice's wonderland, but the writer says that he used the books as a template.

Handpainted porcelain boxes of Disney *AW* characters from the PHB collection by Midwest of Cannon Falls \$25 each. The Paragon Catalog: 800.657.3934; www.paragongifts.com.

Dave Kellum, now halfway through his marvelous series of twelve Tenniel-based clay sculptures (*KL* 64, p.23) most of which also function as lamps, has changed his home page to <http://davekellum.com>.

Alice in transformation to Humpty Dumpty
Fat Alice, 1973

Father William and Son
Alitji in the Dreamtime, 1975

Study of Disney's Cheshire Cat
Scientific Alician, February 1980

The front cover collage displays the astonishing variety of Byron Sewell's illustrations. All images copyright ©2000 by Byron Sewell.

Welsh Jabberwockarus
Scientific Alician, October 1981

Frog Footman
The Annotated Alice in Nurseryland, 2000

The Pool of Tears
An, Sun-Hee's Adventures Under the Land of the Morning Calm, 1990

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